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Mr. Jack B. Yeats.

I FIRST saw the work of Mr. Jack B. Yeats in a picture of a seaport that had about it all the reality and yet all the romance of such a place. The picture had the engaging name of "Memory Harbour." Soon afterwards I came upon some more work of Mr. Yeats in a tragedy written and illustrated by himself in what he called the "old manner." This play, about a pirate named James Flaunty, the terror of the Western Gulf, was illustrated with tiny woodcuts, such as illustrate the broadsides of the eighteenth century. Soon after this I saw more of Mr. Yeats' illustrations, in three little volumes of Irish Grammar which were some of the most happily illustrated books of modern times, though perhaps few schoolboys would pay any attention to the lessons with such enchanting drawings to divert them. Since those days, I have seen much of Mr. Yeats' work, in all its kinds.

It has about it several qualities that are unusual. Perhaps the first thing that one notices is this, that he takes a romantic view of a toiler's life and amusements. He delights in whatever delights the heart of his race. He is one of those wise men who are not content to seek for romance in a distant century in an imaginary society which never existed ; but find it in the life about them, where the slum provides a living Middle Ages and the Stockbrokers' Palace the Castle of a Renaissance duke.

Nearly all of his best paintings commemorate someone vivid who has lived by his hands in a rough world. Many are of boxers whom he used to watch in the countless rings and boxing halls in South and East London. Some are of circuses, or carmen, or jockeys, and some are of the amusements of cities ; but the very best of them are of scenes in the country life of the West of Ireland, where he lived as a boy.

Mr. Yeats charms us continually, much as Mark Twain charms us, by the boyishness of his delights. His best pictures are filled, as Huckleberry Finn is filled, with the relish of boyhood. One painting in especial seems to me to be of the very essence of his mind. It repre-

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sents a big, flat, floating buoy in Sligo Harbour. On the top of this buoy are three or four intent little boys playing cards or knuckle bones, or some similar game. I feel sure that in his mind, Mr. Yeats is usually out there upon the buoy playing knuckle bones in Sligo Harbour, and when his mind comes ashore, its joy is to talk with those old pilots who filled his boyhood with romance. These pilots were memorable men who, after lives spent at sea, had come ashore to their native towns with minds full of tales of adventures, tropical reefs and birds and fishes. Their work as pilots was seldom exacting, for big ships seldom entered Sligo Harbour. They were, however, skilled men in a romantic and difficult profession which has a special fascination to many boys. Mr. Yeats' mind is filled with tales and memories of these old men. Perhaps all that any artist ever does is to make significant in after life things that were delightful in childhood. Mr. Yeats is always making significant the delights of his days at Rosses Point.

His view of his countrymen is fresh and pleasant. He draws them usually in the vivid moods of their amusements or gatherings, which have about them nothing whatever of the melancholy Celt of recent literature, whose conversation is as keen and whose mind is a terror of its own fancies. He draws them as a most spirited, eager people, fond of all kinds of vehement contest. This taste for contest seems to kindle in every man whom he has ever drawn driving on an Irish road. When he draws a car-driver he draws him stirred up to a test of speed and shows that both horse and man are determined not to be passed upon the road. When he draws a circus, he makes one hear the joke and the applause.

Of all his work, the things that have pleased me most have been records of contest. Of these, two stand out; one, of a racecourse as seen from a horse in a race; the other, a picture of a little colt racing, out of gaiety of heart, with a company riding back from market. These pictures rise up in my mind whenever I think of his work, and with them a third, which is not so much a picture as a pastiche of many pictures, of a company at an Irish fair, among which many donkeys trot with clean, little neat legs and heads full of wisdom.

J. MASEFIELD.



Approaching Rosses Point, early morning.



The Bog Road,



Croke Park, Dublin.
(Singing "My dark Rosaleen").



The Cake Cart.

Delilah, now it was dusk.

By DONN BYRNE.

BENEATH her balcony, in the delicate spring night, the life of Gaza flowed gently as a calm river. Eastward the green hills of Canaan were, Delilah knew, and in imagination she could see the soft blue down of the budding corn, the clouds of flowers, the piping green of the vines, the darkness of the olive trees. And in the west a little moon was, while as yet the sun had not gone down, a little blade of silver, like one sweet note on a flute. It made one wish to be young again, to be a child. . . .

The lamps of Gaza were not lighted. None was eager to go within and below, there was still the jingle of camel bells, the padding of donkeys, the nervous clatter of some horses' hoofs as a desert rider sought to guide his mount in the filled streets. Languid, supercilious Egyptians strolled in the provincial ways; desert men, their eyes suspicious as hawks', moved warily hither and thither; her own countrymen, the squat cheerful Philistines, half-townsmen and half-mariners, walked briskly; mysterious, aloof Phoenicians; an occasional strange seaman from Gaul, come eastward with his ship for a cargo from Asia Minor, and now come the "hough-hough! hough-hough!" of herdsman, and dappled kine went by, belaboured by sticks, and as she looked, Delilah saw the group of Israelites who owned them.

From the street they saw her, and their eyes blazed fury. They pointed her out to one another, with quick wide gestures, and she could hear the gutturals of their denunciation. . . . Oh, yes, they remembered Samson, after twenty years! Remembered him almost as well as she!

She had been thinking of him only that minute, too. It was strange, but at this time each year, his memory, his image came to her, so that she could say in winter, "On the second moon of Spring there will be flowers, and an air like wine, and the Mediterranean fishers will overhaul their gear, and I shall think of Samson," and she was the only person in Philistia who could remember him clearly.

Some old magistrate perhaps, or captain of civic guard might, their memory jogged, recall the Hebrew rebel, and say:

"Wasn't there a Samson once, a great red-bearded man, who was supposed to have killed a lion with his bare hands? Or perhaps I am thinking of some of the black African giants, wrestlers or circus men. I don't know. But I seem to recall the name."

And about him, among his own people, had arisen a great myth, as will arise among desert peoples and their telling stories by the fire. The

old guerilla captain had become a national hero to them, and they had magnified his raids out of all proportion to reality.

And when they thought in the desert tents of the destiny of their people, and longed for the day when the then rich south-western country would be theirs by either conquest or penetration, they said, "If Samson had lived. . . . If Samson hadn't gone wrong. . . ."

And Delilah they cursed bitterly, even after twenty years and they saw her not as Samson's wife, but as some strange perfumed woman who had enticed him, and sold him to his enemies. Even the little children were taught to curse her. And all she had done was to adore him, and love him, and to care for and pity him when he had grown old and blind and astray in the head.

Oh, well, what did it matter what they said.

Three men there had been in her life, her childhood's sweetheart in her native valley of Sorek, the slim lad who was to have married her and settled down in the valley to lead the idyllic life of country lovers. But he had gone to Egypt, and been infested with ambition, and they had grown apart and never married. And now in Egypt he was a suave administrator, very close to the Pharoah, a great man.

And there had been Samson.

And there was her present husband, small, hawk-eyed, taciturn, the greatest of the Oriental sea captains, who knew the Mediterranean as other men knew the lake of Galilee, who had passed through the straits, known to the Greeks as the pillars of Hercules, and been north to Ibernica, the land of forests and savage hairy Celts, and bearded druid priests with sinister eyes, and to other lands where the Phoenicians had great tin mines. A quite efficient man, he!

To her husband she gave admiration, and a fond devotion. To the boy of her youth she had given her heart in a burst of virginal music. But to the rough Hebrew rebel, a stranger to her race, in religion, in every mode of life, she had given an immensity of love. . . .

In her face, now, that once had a proud, singing beauty, was dignity and power and wisdom. Strands of grey in her hair and shadows near her eyes. In all Gaza, in all Philistia, there was not one to refuse her reverence excepting, of course, the strange gipsy people who contended she had ruined their champion and lord.

A queer people, they! A strange, inimical folk, who had come into Canaan out of Egypt, headed by magicians who had cloven the Red Sea—so they claimed—and their hand was against the dwellers in Canaan.

So Delilah viewed them with little interest and not a little contempt, a turbulent, annoying, ignorant, clever people; their quaint folk-songs and dances, their peculiar religious revivals, their passionate hatreds—undependable, that is what they were.

Came her youth and her growing into womanhood. . . . She wondered sometimes if he of her young days, for all his closeness to the Pharoah of Egypt, his Egyptian palace, his Egyptian wife, ever remembered

the warm green days of Sorek, and how they had grown together from fifteen to twenty-three.

Nothing had ever been said between them of marriage, but it was accepted by them that they would marry, as it was accepted that the sun shines, and with night come the stars. They might have been two girls together, or they might have been two boys, so sweet was the friendship between them.

The adventure of life unclosing itself came to them together—all the beauty of the world, the wild smiling flowers, the sun dropping over the hills, the clamour of birds in Spring as they raided the seeded fields, the little fish that jumped in the pools when the winds stilled and evening came—all that was a tremendous bond. Even now when she thought of places in the valley of her childhood she could picture them only as background for his calm, young face. It seemed natural, the blossoming of apple trees and her young lover's face.

And Delilah's dreams—five years of dreaming, of the governing of a house, and the regiment of maid-servants, of little children. Five years dreaming! And he had gone into Egypt and had never come back. Only stories returned of his success, of his offices, of his wife. . . .

She had thought, being a young woman then, that what was killed with such a tremendous shock was her love, but she knew now, now that she was nine-and-forty years, that what had died was a dream. She had been shocked, disoriented, and her life which had been so carefully planned, suddenly had no more meaning.

It had made a woman of her, though, and made her proud. She must have something to do, to think about. Love and all thoughts of love she put aside. In order to escape from herself she began to study people, questions of the day, this, that. It was probably the woman loving the underdog that turned her eyes on the question of the poor Hebrew, rather than to the glory of Egypt, or the power of the merchant cities.

She became their friend, and they came to know her. Probably they robbed her a little, but the cost was so small compared to the luxury of escape. . . . All her friends smiled at her hobby and spoke of the Israelites as "Delilah's Hebrews," and they wondered how a woman of her looks and standing should bother with these things. Why didn't she get married, they asked? Or was she becoming queer?

But Delilah only smiled. They were her anodyne. She liked their strange folk-dances; their wailing nostalgic songs. And their legends—their was about them a quaintness and simplicity she loved—Adam and Eve in the garden; the story of Noah and his ark; the naive legend of Babel; and the newer history of the leader who had been found by the Egyptian princess in the bulrushes—what was his name? Moses! That was it. . . . How simple they were, how refreshingly simple, the dear things!

It had often seemed to her a strange thing, as she sat thinking, how

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that all one labours to learn passes easily away, and what one feels remains, welcome or no. All the book learning of her early years had gone, but there would never go the memory of her first blushing kiss, and though it was six-and-twenty years since he had gone from her life, yet the thought of the Philistine boy who was now a grandee of Egypt—that remained.

So likewise all she had learned of the Hebrews was gone—now a legend, now a saying would come back to her, some proverb or a piece of ritual, but like a bar from a tune one has forgotten. But everything she felt, everything she had known of great Samson remained with her.

One learns things and one lives things. The things written in the head fade out and die, but the words on the heart bite deeper and deeper. . . . She could remember every kiss he had given, the immense madness he had evoked. . . . O God, was it possible that she, so calm now, so respected, so wise, had once shaken like a leaf at his voice? Her knees had trembled; her heart fought in her breast like a caged bird; her throat had gone dry. . . .

Before she met him, she knew him by repute, a huge turbulent man of immense strength, who had often been in trouble with the Philistine authorities. . . . In the tribal troubles, some years before, his name had been very prominent. He had married a Philistine girl in Timnath, and there had been a riot at the wedding, over a question of dowry, or something of the kind, and some of the girl's Philistine relations had been killed.

A sort of vendetta had arisen and Samson had declared war against the nation. He had proceeded to burn the corn stacked in the fields—there was a strange rumour that he had captured an immensity of foxes and tying burning brands to their tails had loosed them among the harvest.

Then of course from a family quarrel it had become a national affair and Samson was proscribed. Prodigious stories were told of his strength and valour, of his defeating patrols single-handed, and refuging himself on the rocks of Etom. The Hebrews were asked to give him up to authority, and brought him to Lehi bound. But there he burst his cords, such immense strength had he got, and escaped after slaying twenty men in a hand-to-hand fight. Then he had become a bandit of the hills on whose head a price was set.

Around him a romance grew, as will about all mountain chiefs, to which Samson lived up most gallantly. Careless of disguise, careless of danger, he had come with his great red beard and his hair floating to his hips into Gaza itself once to see a woman. The watchmen were told, and the city gates were locked while they searched for him, but he crashed through the gates with his terrific shoulders and made his way to Hebron. It was said he carried parts of the iron work with him to make weapons.

All this had happened years before, and all the border warfare was over, and Samson was no longer a proscribed bandit, but a great man of the Hebrews leaping suddenly into fame and holding fame and power as such men will. He no longer raided harvests and kine, nor came

to Gaza secretly, but now he walked like a conqueror. It was said that it irked him that everything was so peaceful and quiet, and he regretted the old roaming days. To the Hebrews he was a great figure, a champion.

Delilah had never understood how they made a champion out of this guerilla fighter, but when she saw him for the first time she understood. He came to thank her for the interest she had taken in his race.

"You have been good to my people," his voice thundered. "I thank you."

Herself a tall woman, had to look up like a child to him, and herself, no small woman, felt a reed beside that vast muscular bulk. She had two impressions of him, his immense masculine quality, and his tremendously arrogant manner. For everything Philistine he seemed to hold a tremendous contempt. He had beaten them, and physically he thought little enough of them.

To Delilah, it was a wonder and an irritation that she should be so moved, so thrown off her axis mentally and emotionally by the presence of this great hairy man. All her senses were jangled suddenly. One part of her, the Philistine lady, smiled in a little patronizing contempt for the unconcealed boastfulness of his words, for his insulting glance at the passerby.

But another, a strange Delilah, clamoured :

"No matter what he says, let him speak on. My heart opens at his voice. . . . Let him condemn all men with his arrogant eye, but let him not condemn me !"

The Philistine lady had a little disgust for the way he laid his hand on the heads, on the shoulders of his followers, pawing them clumsily. But the new Delilah clamoured :

"If he lays his hand on me, I shall faint to the ground and die !" And a burning shame rose in her, and her face reddened. And she said to herself : "God ! God ! I have suddenly gone mad !"

All her culture, her tradition, all the fine conventions of her life, seemed suddenly to vanish, become nothing, before this immense male. All the men of her life, friends, her young false lover, relatives, seemed like puppets beside him—their shaven faces, their polished speech, the carefulness of dress and demeanour. The rufous giant had appeared, and "Away," he seemed to have cried, and they had whirled off, like blown feathers.

If she were troubled he was troubled, too. The directness of him read her perturbation. A great desire rose in the turbulent hillsman to be near her, to know her body and soul.

They looked at each other, each reading the other's thought, until their throats became dry, and all words were just trivial sounds, meaning nothing. Dumb and wondrous he was, and she dumb and bowing with shame. How they parted was to her a mystery, but that their hands touched, and at the touch all her bone and flesh seemed to go liquid, and

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her knees trembled as with an immensity of fear. And nothing seemed stable in the world but his great hot hand, that trembled too. . . .

Bowed with shame she was, troubled, blind in purpose, all the familiar things of her house and lands were now unfamiliar, unimportant. The long day dragged, and in her heart was a storm, like a hot wind from the desert. She refuged herself in her inner rooms, in the coolness of her inner rooms, but that brought no relief, and restlessly she must come out again.

The Asian sun dropped into the hissing sea, and came the soft Syrian dusk, and the swift coolth of the night. The heat of mind and body went with the heat of the day. There remained only a deep longing, that seemed to be a nostalgia of the infinite. Without the night was blue, there was only a little wind among the apple trees, and all the flowers had closed until dawn would come, but the birds were unsilent and the earth itself was restless, now spring was here.

The night wind cooled her sweet brow and ruffled the dark perfumed hair at her temples. All the longing of the night came to her lips in a little song—an air, and faltering unthought, words.

“O Spring, which begins now——” went the throbbing contralto.

There was a rustle among the trees. Her heart stopped beating.

“Is someone there? Who is there? Who? But she knew well who was there.

“Who is it? Who is it?”

She saw the great bulk in the blue night, like a giant, like some great giant of the earth.

“It is I. Samson.”

“What—how——” Words would not come to her. Nor would words mean anything. “Why——”

She put out her hands—she knew not for what reason, perhaps to thrust him away—her slim white hands in the dusk. He seized them. Once again she throbbed from head to foot, and her knees became weak, and all of her melted. And she fell forward, will having left her, on the great bearded chest.

“I am dying,” she murmured. “O my God, I die!”

Through all Philistia the news had gone, that Delilah had become infatuated with and married the guerilla leader, and the young men stormed: Was she mad? Or what had he done to her? And an immense disgust arose in them. Delilah, to marry that! Delilah, of all women! Delilah, beautiful, gifted, with all her tradition, to be bound to this ragamuffin warrior! This fatuous boaster, with his red hair of comedy, and yokel whiskers! How disgusting, how degrading! And they had offered her all their hearts and poetry, and she had chosen this. O Delilah! Delilah!

Older men and women said nothing. Some of them understood. The freakish and terrible lightning that passion is, and how it strikes. In some women that was what strong drink is to men, a mocker and a

raging thing. A pity though, Delilah. . . . And the priests shook their heads. It will not last, they said, and her heart will be broken.

Though it was pain to them, still they came to see her, to let her know that nothing mattered, she was their friend always. . . . They had to suffer seeing the great red one at the head of the table, hearing his jokes and reminiscences.

Sometimes a great rage against the Philistines would take him, and he would give vent to it by telling at the table of his fight at Ramath-leki when he had annihilated the Philistine patrol with the first weapon to hand, a great bone he had found in the desert sands. After many years and much telling he had exaggerated the deed out of all proportion, until from ten it had become a thousand men.

"And do you know what that bone was?" He would put his immense hands on the table and lean forward.

"The jawbone of an ass," he roared with the thunderous laughter. "Ho! ho! The jawbone of an ass. With the jawbone of an ass, heaps upon heaps, with the jaw of an ass have I slain a thousand men."

She understood now, looking back, how pathetic a figure the red giant was, had she only had the eyes, the wisdom to see then. He was so lost among the suave sophisticated Philistines, who could hurt more with a word than he could with his great brawny hands. Beneath his swelling thews he was only a child. He wanted to be as important as the guests in her house. Feeling they despised him for his origin, and his manners, his boastfulness and his arrogance were only a defence.

Little by little now Delilah's friends disappeared, and she was glad of it, for she hated to see Samson despised, disliked.

She had chosen her husband, and what she had chosen was her own business. No matter how queer he was, she couldn't have him laughed at. . . . So they stayed away, and she was glad of it, and little by little the great wonder of her marriage provoked no more passion, no more discussion.

A new strange element came up in this isolation—Samson didn't like being left alone by the Philistines. Somewhere in his mind arose the theory that it was a new insult, a new harm. He grew short with his wife; became irritable; nothing pleased him. He was not a farmer, a warrior he! he complained. He was entitled to relaxation, amusement, conversation. He was no vegetable—

"Then, Samson, you would like people here?"

He didn't like to be left alone, as though he had the plague, or treated as though he were nobody, by God!

"Then, they shall come, Samson."

But—ah!—there was something, he objected. He didn't like this damned superciliousness, this accursed Philistine superiority—

"You imagine it, Samson. You are too sensitive, my big lover."

"Then they are not superior; are not better than I?"

"Of course not, great Samson. In every way you are as good as

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they. The same as they. You would look the same as they, only better-looking, more magnificent, if only——”

“ If only what ? ”

“ Oh, don’t be angry with me, lover, if I tell you. There is only one thing remarkable about you ; one thing they can criticise. If only your hair——”

“ Ha ! my hair ! ”

“ O Lover, without it, you would look so great and splendid, and dignified. There would be nothing to criticise.”

“ But Delilah, my strength is in my hair.”

“ O Lover, lover, don’t be silly ! ”

“ Also my parents took a vow——”

“ But darling, your parents never knew you were to be such a great man, and that you would have to command respect from the nation——”

“ Of course, of course. But, Delilah, if my strength goes——”

“ Dearest, it won’t go. How could it ? ”

“ And they won’t have anything to criticise then ! Ha ! Then off it comes ! ”

She was so happy, the tears came into her eyes. This strange desire to wear his hair long as a woman’s had been a bugbear to her. This foppishness, freakishness, superstition, whatever it was, it made him remarkable. She couldn’t suffer to have men smile at him.

“ If you only knew how happy you make me ! ”

He was ludicrously nervous as she shore off the great red braids. He was more, he was frightened. The burden gone, he strolled casually around, picked up a little bar of iron at the fireplace, twisted it to form a loop, was satisfied. Glanced at himself in the long metal mirror, smiled.

“ I think it suits me well.”

A thrill of delight came to Delilah, a new, a younger Samson had appeared. Her heart went pit-a-pat. . . . A great dignity sat on him now, and he weighed his words at the table. Gone with his hair was his old arrogance, and seemingly his race hatred. . . .

For some brief weeks Delilah knew happiness such as she never believed possible in earth or heaven. . . . So fine, so strong he looked, so greatly he acted, so—so fully he loved. . . . Of course it couldn’t have lasted, she knew now. How fast catastrophe !

Quietly he said one day : “ How soon it gets dark ! Night falls faster than it used. An hour ago the sun was shining, and now it is dark.”

She felt as if some cruel fingers had seized her heart, her throat. She froze to the ground.

“ What did you say ? ”

“ I say : why don’t the maidens bring lights ? ”

“ Not yet, dear heart. . . . Let us stay in the warm dusk. Wait, I take your hand.”

A few days later he stumbled and all but fell, was clumsy. She flew to his side.

"My eyes," he said, "a touch of sun. Nothing particular." But she sent for a physician.

"It's nothing," Samson said. "Something I've eaten. I'll go asleep."

"Dear Samson, to please me." The physician examined his eyes.

"Well?" Delilah drew him aside.

"The early days in the desert. . . . He is going blind."

A few days later came a great bellow from the garden!

"The Philistines are upon me. They have put out my eyes."

"Samson? Dear heart, listen——"

"They have shaven the seven locks of my head. They have taken my strength from me. They have put out my eyes."

"Samson, Samson, listen. It is I, Delilah. Don't you know me?"

His great roar had brought out the household, and men from the hillside, and stopped folk on the road. And they all came running now, thinking some murder was being done.

"The Philistines are upon me. They have put out my eyes?" he roared. He went stumbling piteously through the orchard, the trunks of the trees hurtling him, the branches striking his defenceless face. Delilah called a serving lad.

"Go after my lord Samson," she said, "and lead, whithersoever he wishes."

All afternoon, and evening, and late into the night she sat white and stricken, waiting for his step, waiting for news of him. In the darkness a horse galloped up. An officer of the Philistines sought her.

"Have you news of Samson?"

"Yes, Delilah. He is in Gaza, in the prison house."

"In the prison house! What has he done?"

"He has done nothing, Delilah, he is—he is mad and blind, and would come in. We tried to send him home to you, but he wouldn't come. And he wouldn't go to the Hebrews. We were afraid of something happening to him, so we took him in. . . . What shall we do, Delilah?"

"Would you—would you let him stay?"

"If you wish it, Delilah."

"He will be least unhappy there."

Just when she had become reconciled to this strange situation, herself honoured and in luxury, her husband mad and blind, and insisting on being a prisoner of the Philistines, just when she had striven to make and succeeded in making this seem a normal, a usual thing, a courier from Gaza came. . . . What his business was she never imagined.

"Delilah, Samson is dead!"

"Samson dead? What do you mean?"

"Delilah, Samson was wandering through the town. He had asked

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the master of the prison house could he go to see the new temple of Daigon. Though he couldn't see it he wanted to feel it, its pillars and stone. A little lad brought him. And there was a scaffolding in front on which three men were working, and he knocked against it, and felt the pillars, and stopped. . . .

"And he put his hands on two of the pillars of the scaffolding, and listened to the workmen above, and then called out: 'O Lord God, remember me, I pray thee, and strengthen me, I pray thee, only this once, O God, that I may be at once avenged of the Philistines for my eyes.'"

"And he took hold of the two middle pillars of the scaffolding——"

"Oh!" Delilah's voice came in a long moan. "Oh! my poor love! my poor lord! oh! . . . The workmen," she asked, "were they—killed?"

"One was lamed and one bruised, and one had a shoulder smashed; but only Samson, Delilah, is dead."

"I shall go with you. . . ."

They had taken him into a cool corner of the temple, and when she saw him there was no longer doubt in her, or—hope. He lay there with a great dignity, a new majesty, all the pain and baffledness had gone from his face, and the poor empty eyes were closed. . . .

"Delilah, where is he—to stay?" The captain of the guards leaned toward her.

"Not with us, kinsman. He mightn't rest. He will sleep with his own."

"Then shall I tell his brethren, and the house of his father to come?"

"Do, kinsman," she said. She turned her head to the shadows. "Tell them to come and take him," she said.

And now night had come, and the little lamps of Gaza burned clear in the blue softness. The sun had gone down in the west, and the silver blade of the moon had all but followed. Delilah felt cold and stiff and there were tears in her heart that would not come to her eyes for relief. The heaviness of an old sorrow, it never went, and she didn't know if she wanted it to go. . . . She rose to go within.

"Delilah, the great harlot," a raucous voice accused her from the blackness of the street. "She enticed our lord Samson and made him sleep on her knees——"

She stopped and listened. Venom was sprayed against her from the street. Suddenly the tears came, the welcome tears, and gratitude went in a white shaft from her to the bitter men in the streets, for this: that after so many years great Samson was not forgotten, that he lived in their mind and hearts still, as in hers.



An Ofráil.

Do tháinig an Dall
Go haltóir tráth :
Síos ar an leac lom
Do leag sé an bláth.

“ Cailfs na mil-bheach,
Cumhracht na mbán,
Síoda nach sníomhtar,
Glacse óm láimh.

“ An sciamh ná braithim,
Míorúilt a dhath—
(Toil leat ná dearcaim)
Otráilim chó maith.”

SÉAMUS Ó HAODHA..

A Victim of Good Fortune.

(From the French of Henry Murger).

I.

The Setting.

THE COUNTESS CELESTE DE VAUXCHAMPS, who was perched in the window, sprang back suddenly with the frightened gesture of a woman who sees a spider, then sinking into an armchair, where she remained motionless with terror, she cried : " Ah, My God ! "

The Count, who was profoundly occupied in the buttoning of his gloves, turned at his wife's exclamation, and, stepping over to the armchair, said gently : " What is the matter, Céleste ? " The Countess opened her beautiful eyes, and said : " It is going to rain ! " The Count ran to the window, and saw in the sky—ten minutes ago a sky of untroubled serenity—great black clouds advancing like aerial phantoms. At the same moment there was a violent peal of thunder, and large raindrops began to spot the gravel in the courtyard of the house.

He shut the window violently, and, going over to the mantelpiece, rang the bell. A servant appeared. " Unharness the horses," said the Count ; " we are not going into the country to-day." Approaching his wife, who grew paler as the day grew darker, he said, in a choking voice : " You are right, Céleste, it is going to rain," and began to walk with great strides up and down the room.

A strangely ironical smile played on his pale features, and, raising his hands, he cried : " At last ! " " What is wrong with you, Felix ? " asked his wife, anxiously.

" Call me no more by that name," said the Count ; " it is but an irony." And, seating himself beside the Countess, he remained, like her, mute and mournful, in the attitude of a man who has been suddenly stricken by a blow of fate.

II.

Digression.

Considering the cause which gave rise to it, the scene with which our story opens would seem to be passing strange. A cloud—a summer cloud—which, appearing unexpectedly, surprises a party setting out for the country, is surely not a sufficient reason for serious alarm, and the collapse of the Countess, the conduct of the Count will certainly appear to be extremely childish—even in the privacy of their house ! We would

reply, however, that this atmospheric caprice, which, being unlooked for, might, in others, excite a momentary vexation, had for the Count and his wife, all the proportions of an event. For them these sombre clouds were big with disaster; for them the lights which tore the sky were characters of flame in which they read a prophecy more awful than did the scriptural feasters of old; and in the dull booming of the thunder they could hear the threatening murmur of an approaching catastrophe. Yet, at this very moment, while the Count and his wife remained terrified in the face of such an ordinary phenomenon, it would have been said of them, in a score of households, that they were "the happiest couple in the world." And those who—either through envy or in good faith—spoke thus of them would, at the same time, have been right and wrong; for "better" is the enemy of "well," and to be too happy is the commencement of not being happy at all.

"A paradox!" you will say, Sir—or Madame. Paradoxes are but truths in fancy dress—that is why one does not recognize them at once; and if you care to accompany me, you will meet with many more of them in the chapters that follow.

III.

Felix.

The Count Felix de Vauxchamps had had for foster parents all those beneficent and miracle-working fairies in whom, of old, we believed with such a simple faith, for—to digress again—from the very cradle, as though to accustom us to disillusion, we are taught to put our faith in fictions.

His infancy had been passed beneath the calm guardianship of his mother, who had yielded to his every caprice, who was ever occupied in anticipating his desires lest he should be forced to the necessity of expressing them in tears. Therefore he went unruffled, for every toy he wished for was his, to keep or break.

At the age of eight he was sent to school, and his good luck went with him there. He attained his Greek and Latin without sacrificing a single hour of play, without once encountering those twin enemies of the schoolboy—imposition and dry bread! In those schoolboy combats in which youngsters, preparing themselves for the battle of later life, develop often those evil instincts which last so long, Felix came through unspoiled.

Never had he been deceived in his earliest love affairs; and so we see him at the age of fifteen advancing towards youth with outstretched hands, and with a heart brimmed full of hopes.

On the attainment of his majority he entered into possession of his fortune—a key of gold with which to open the impossible.

He entered into life with all the eagerness of one athirst for knowledge. Happiness still attended him, and he found the reality as fair as his dream. All the passions held out to him their cups of enchant-

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ment, and he drank of them, to the very depth, without tasting of bitterness ! All hopes held out their promises to him, and every obstacle stepped aside to allow him free passage to his every wish !

His first love affair—like all first love affairs an experiment of the heart—had been as simple and charming as a German fairy tale. His princess was his from the first moment. They loved, and met, and exchanged their vows quite naturally. And their parting was as delightful as their first encounter.

Felix next encountered ambition. He locked himself up for six months and wrote a book. Eight days after its publication he found himself famous ! The most ferocious critics paid homage to his work, and proclaimed day by day in the journals how great a man he was. He threw himself into the literary world, and was given a frankly cordial reception. His success, since it had been attained without aid or effort, awakened no jealousy, offended no one's pride, " perfectly miraculous," said his friends.

Felix became the hero of the Parisian world. The word " Spirituel," which he had pronounced in a salon, was, two hours later, whispered in every other salon in Paris. If he said it was so it *was* so, for he was right everywhere and always. Where hundreds would have met with ridicule, he found only a new sympathy. His wildest eccentricities would have been accepted. If he had chosen to robe himself in scarlet no one would have dared to laugh !

Never had he met a funeral on his way from a fete. Never had a wretched beggar stretched out a hand to him upon the steps of the splendid mansion wherein a sumptuous repast awaited him. Never had an old and ugly woman brushed against him as he came from visiting one young and fair. Never, in fact, during the twenty years of his life, had fortune deserted him. All that he touched turned to gold ; all that he saw was beautiful ; everything that he did was right.

IV.

The Pursuit of Misfortune.

Felix, however, grew restless under that obstinate happiness which scarcely allowed him to formulate a desire before it was realised. The eternal azure fatigued him ; he sought a point of shade wherein to soothe his eyes. He looked for some vexation which might break for a while that monotonous chain of his prosperity. Vain hope ! for still his sky remained eternally blue. One day he thought that he had achieved his object. In a meeting with some friends he considered himself insulted by a direct contradiction. He replied with a sharp retort, which was taken up at once. A meeting was arranged.

It was his first duel. Every aspect of the affair was in his favour. Pistols happened to be the weapons selected, and he was a dead shot. At the very moment when the signal to fire was given, the sun—till that



"An ancient porter admitted the Count and his astonished bride."

moment hidden behind a cloud—burst out and shining straight into the eyes of his opponent caused him to fire wildly. Felix remained unmoved. He had, at arm's distance, the life of a man—and remorse. Fate saved him that. He missed his opponent.

One morning a friend met him as he stepped into a coach. "Where are you going?" said he. "I am going to make a tour of the world," said Felix, laughing; "and 'twill be devilish hard if I don't find misfortune somewhere on the road." But he found nothing, save some new pleasures—some joys which were hitherto unknown to him. Can it be, he meditated, that ill-luck is contagious, and that one can only find it amongst the unfortunate? Let us try!

He adopted a vulgar name; dressed himself shabbily, and went to live in a quarter in which all the inhabitants appeared to be bowed down beneath the weight of every earthly sorrow. The house which he had chosen was the most pestilent of all. A place of filth into which the sunlight never entered. But in this horrible habitation lived a group of hard-working artisans who sang from morn to night! Felix on his first evening in the house was awakened by the sound of a voice; he listened. It was his next-door neighbour who was inditing golden verses in praise of some ideal beauty. In the morning he went to the window. At the window opposite was a beautiful young girl, fresh and rosy as a face by Greuze, who smiled, astonished, on perceiving him. On the following morning it was Felix who was first at the window. The fair one was called Felicity. She wore her heart on her sleeve, and she offered it to Felix, who had not the will to refuse. He had also made the acquaintance of his neighbour the rhymster, and found in him a generous nature and a talent with which he could sympathise. At the end of six months Felix left the house to which he had come in search of misfortune, having found only a new friend and a new love.

"Does misfortune then consist in poverty," said he, another day; "let us proceed to ruin ourselves." He put half his fortune into a more than doubtful investment, and the other half he brought to Baden, to risk upon the gaming tables there. Seeing him enter the room Fortune came and sat down beside him. He broke the bank! On his return to Paris he was informed by his solicitor that a vote in the Chamber had transformed his doubtful investment into a "splendid thing." "You are very fortunate," said the solicitor; "in six months' time you will have doubled your money!" "Go and sell out immediately," said Felix, "I have wealth enough!"

"Where then is misfortune?" said Felix to one of his friends. "I have grown tired of chasing her." "Wait a while," said his friend, "She will be here soon enough!" "Let her come," said Felix. "My door is on the latch!"

Another day, in more ironical humour, he exclaimed: "By jove, I have one more chance of meeting her!" "What is it?" said his friend, Raymond, the poet. "Marriage! Either I am very much

mistaken, or my happy destiny will desert me on the day of my wedding ! ” “ Whom will you marry ? ” asked Raymond, laughing. “ I don’t know,” said Felix ; “ but I won’t make the selection ; I have far too lucky a hand. I’ll leave it to chance. The first girl who comes into the room at my aunt’s reception to-night I’ll marry ! Meet me there to-night.” He’s quite mad, thought Raymond ; but he kept the appointment nevertheless.

The two friends withdrew into a corner of the salon, and fixed their lorgnettes upon the door. “ Let us see how chance will do his work,” said Felix.

After many introductions, a valet announced :

“ Monsieur and Mademoiselle de Marènes.”

“ Here comes my wife,” said Felix. “ I will ask her for the first quadrille ; ” and he left Raymond at the card table.

An hour later Felix rejoined his friend. “ The wedding will take place in a month,” said he. “ My aunt will arrange everything to-morrow. I have persuaded her that I am desperately in love with Mademoiselle Céleste de Marènes.” Raymond was dumbfounded.

“ But, do you not know,” said he, “ that she is the very antithesis of her name ? She’s a golden-haired devil ! ”

“ Red,” said Felix.

“ Her tongue is a sting ! ”

“ I know ; she has stung me twice already ! ”

“ Those trailing robes of her’s conceal cloven hooves ! ”

“ And have a flaming red that blinds the eyes ! ” “ I know all about it,” said Felix. “ She is a daughter of Eve, pure blooded, with appetite enough to devour all the apples in the world—with the pips ! She has been saying to me—in parenthesis as it were—things that would raise the hair on the head of any man who would aspire to her hand ! We have opposite tastes in everything. She loves Raphael you know my preference for Reubens. She adores Rossini, while I hate Italian music—(the devil fly away with me)—I think she has even a slight squint ! A month from to-day the wedding ! ”

“ Give over this folly,” said Raymond, who could not believe that his friend was serious. “ It will bring you misfortune.”

“ Of course,” said Felix, “ that’s what I’m counting on ! ”

V.

Plan of Battle.

A month later Felix had married Céleste de Marènes, who had no relative save her father—an old officer, who having still somewhat of youth in his veins was delighted to be rid of her guardianship, and had not to be asked twice for his consent.

“ What,” said Felix one day to his wife ; “ Is it possible that you have no living relatives—not even a second cousin ? ”

“ My God, no ! ” answered Céleste, laughing.

"Well," thought Felix, "such things could only happen to me!"

It had been arranged that—according to custom—the bride and bridegroom should leave Paris immediately after the ceremony, and Céleste had expressed a desire to stay in a delicious country house (bequeathed to her by her grandmother) which was situated in Provence, a few steps from the fountain of Vaucluse.

"It is an enchanted Eden," said the young countess to her husband. "These lovely places are still full of the memory of Laura and Petrarch, who have left there a faint fragrance of poetry and love. Happiness awaits us there. Let us go."

And they set out.

During the first stage of the journey Felix decided, quite suddenly, to alter the charming programme, arranged by his wife. "It is quite evident," he thought, "that I am about to be the happiest of men if I allow myself to be led into this Provencal Paradise. Poetry will creep into my brain, and love into my heart, perhaps, he added (looking at Céleste, who was asleep, her head resting upon his shoulder), and feeling at the same moment a sensation of a very singular kind. "This will never do! I didn't marry for happiness—for love. On the contrary!"

On a sudden resolution he gave an order to the postillion to change the route; then, rubbing his hands together, he laughed and murmured: "If I cannot altogether escape the joys of the honeymoon, we will, at least, begin with a storm."

And he went to sleep, to awake in the morning astonished at finding that they were clasping hands.

"Singular!" he thought. "Now I'm not at all certain that it was I who did that!" And he looked at Céleste, who, in order to conceal her blushes, put her head out of the coach window.

"Oh, my God!" cried the young countess; "where are we? What a horrible place!"

"Good!" thought Felix; "it's beginning!" They were, as a matter of fact, crossing an abominably desolate country; a scene depicted, one would say, by the savage brush of Salvator. The coach was moving slowly through a deep ravine, lined on either side by boulders of gigantic size, and topped with red bushes which seemed to claw at the passing clouds. On the height of this natural inferno was perched a ruined fortress—the dwelling-place in olden days of some feudal baron, but now the home of owls.

"What a melancholy ruin!" said the Countess, clasping her hands, and, looking about her; and finding herself surrounded by this depressing landscape, she added: "How can anyone live in such a place!"

"This is going on nicely," thought Felix; "the storm will soon be on us now!" Then, addressing the postilion, he shouted: "Hello there, Peter, turn to the left up the hill." Five minutes later the coach stopped before an alley of ancient yew trees which led to a manor house in ruins.

VI.

Moonlight Effect in Conjugal Affairs.

An ancient porter, who appeared to be expecting them, admitted the Count and his astonished bride. "Where on earth are we?" asked Céleste, as they entered a kind of drawingroom, strewn with furniture, as though it were a lodging-house.

"My dear child," answered the Count, "we are in a place where more drama has been enacted than in all the theatres of the Boulevards together. Every stone of this ruin bears a trace of blood—sad token of a sad event!" And the people of the neighbourhood tell me that every night wandering ghosts—victims or murderers—come hither to recount the horrid mysteries of this ancient fortress, beside which the castle of Udolpho would be but a sheep-fold!"

"But, tell me," said Céleste, with a little impatient gesture, "Where are we?"

"It is the home of my ancestors," said Felix. "You wished to bring me to *your* house. I have brought you to mine. You promised me an Eden: I offer you a hell" (which should be complete, now that the devil is here, thought the Count, glancing at his wife).

A seraphic smile lit up the charming features of the Countess. She raised her hand and pointed to the sculptured frieze of the room, where, amidst delicately carved garlands of flowers, the letters C and F were interlaced like amorous figures. Then leaning towards the Count, who looked on uncomprehending, she said: "Thank you, Felix!" It was the first time she had called him by this name, and he was stirred to the very depth of his being. With difficulty he hid his emotion. Nevertheless he persisted in reading nothing save a gentle irony into this expression of her thanks, of which he did not suspect the meaning. She had to point a second time to the carved initials before he understood.

As a matter of fact, those letters in which poor Céleste had seen a proof of his affectionate forethought were only there by accident, or, rather, had been there since the foundation of the place. And he had never noticed them since, two years ago, he had purchased the house as a hunting lodge! For a moment the Count thought of undeceiving her; but she looked at him so tenderly that he had not the heart to destroy the charming illusion which she had just created. "No," he thought, "it would be too brutal." And, taking her by the hand he led her away to explore the other parts of the chateau. "It is an awful place," said he; but we won't remain here. I only wanted to show it to you in passing."

"Why won't we stay here?" said Céleste.

"It's a regular wilderness," said he.

"So much the better!" said Céleste. "We shall be alone."

"But, after eight days of it, you would die of boredom, like Goethe's Mignon, when she sighed for her orange groves."

A Victim of Good Fortune

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"Wherever we are together," said the Countess, "I am happy. Everything I look at when I am with you, seems to me beautiful. Here, at least in the midst of these mountains, we are free—freer than at Vaucluse, where, as in all famous places, tourists abound. And, moreover, this savage scenery lacks neither grandeur nor poetry. Here on this summit we can feast our eyes on all the wonderful spectacle of nature, as it unfolds around us day by day. Look," she added, stretching out her hand; "look at those fields all bathed in the light of the setting sun! How splendid they are! How lovely!"

"Oh, the devil," thought the Count; "here comes the poetry!" And he looked anxiously to see if his wife's finger nails were stained with ink—her feet shod with azure. But he saw only a delicious ankle, which sent a trouble into his thought. At the moment the evening shadows began to cover the plain beneath them. The great neighbouring forests sent floating on the passing breeze their bitter, intoxicating perfume, the thousand harmonies of the night-time uniting in one, arose as though to serenade the stars which began to appear one by one above the ebony casement of the dark. Felix grew conscious of something that awakened in his heart. He listened and heard the voice of ancient memories, which came to remind him that it was on such a night (and not so far from here!) he had met with the first woman he had loved. He looked around and saw Céleste, who, having as yet no memories, heard only the soft chanting of her hopes. "You are an angel, and you have hidden your wings from me," he said, approaching his wife, and taking her hand he kissed it.

This single phrase, the first of endearment he had addressed to her, caused a strange fluttering in the heart of Céleste. She leaned her head on his shoulder, and whispered: "We will be happy here."

Alas—I fear—thought Felix, leading his wife into the room which had been prepared for them.

"We *will* stay here, then?" said Céleste.

"Yes," said her husband; "come here and look," and drawing her into the corner of the window he showed her the moon, which had just appeared through a curtain of cloud, and thrown its silver upon the darkness of the heavens."

"Ah!" said his wife—and blushed.

"It is our honeymoon!" said the Count.

(To be continued).

The Little Black Ass.

By MICHAEL SCOT.

"Poor woman, the pleasure of God
Be over your way!"

"A blessing, O son, on the sod
You were cutting to-day."

"There was no one a moment before
On your share of the ground."

"I stepped up the rise of the shore
And you looking round."

"And is it a tinker you are,
Or a woman of charms?
And is it a child or a star
That you have in your arms?"

"There's a fountain of beauty and grief
In each of your cheeks,
Are you, maybe, the queen of a chief
From the host of the Greeks?"

"Is there hunger upon you who brood
By this raggedy thorn?"

"I am trudging the wide earth for food
Since the ring of the morn!"

"I will give you the apple I stole
O'er the crown of a wall.
(O bright in his eyes is the soul
Of the child in your shawl!)"

"My spirit is lifted to reach
This mountainy strand."

"You are strange in the land, by your speech?"
"I am strange in the land."

"O, the wounds of your walking are red
On the dark of the bog!"

"From the roads of the East I have fled
Through the drift of the fog."



The Little Black Ass

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“ And I hear a bell ringing for Mass,
But scourged are my heels :
O, lend me the little black ass
With the turf in his creels.”

“ I will give you the ass for your steed
Through wide Innisfail.
No ass is his equal for speed
In the land of the Gael.”

“ He has travelled the bog, he is grey
With the mist of the road,
But joy will be on him to-day
With a queen for his load.”

“ O, mount him, poor woman of light,
Ere the chapel bell cease.
That his sleep may be lucky to-night,
And his wisdom increase.”

“ I will mount him, O little green bough
Of the tree of the West,
Thine ass has a star on his brow
And a cross on his breast.”

The Charity Box.

By HANNAH BERMAN.

THE war had been raging more than a year. Jews had been driven out of other Lithuanian villages months and months before we were driven out of our village. And, then, we were thrown out in the true, orthodox style—just told to go at once, and huddled into a train which went and went and went. The air was thick with the stench of hundreds of people lying on top of one another—sighing, groaning, wailing, cursing, and praying.

That was during the first few days. Later, we began to grow accustomed not only to the horror and misery, but to the agony which every separate individual, by his very existence in the train, imposed on all the rest. Our limbs grew paralysed with the congestion and the oppressive weight of our neighbours. And all our faculties soon lost the power of feeling anything but the immediate needs of our bodies. And we even ceased to interest ourselves in the woman who had been brought to bed of a child in our midst, and were no longer horrified by the dead bodies which we had not the strength to throw out of the windows.

To me the most unendurable thing was the unending groans and sighs and wails of the women. But women are always ready to melt into tears. And what's the use of saying anything about them? Only since I had no one to talk to, I felt more exasperated by the endless wailing of the women than I might have been if I had had something, a man's voice, or strong talk, that is, to distract my attention. This was almost as bad as the hideous discomforts and indecencies and hopelessness of my position.

By nature I am not a patient man; but amongst men, I can keep up my courage—amongst men I am a man, you understand.

Well, at last I edged my way to where a Jew was sitting, huddled up and silent, and evidently without the slightest interest in what was going on about him. He was an oldish man, or perhaps only prematurely old, I don't know which. In the murky light it was impossible to be sure of anything. At last, after much shouting and gesticulating, I managed to make him understand that I wished to speak with him. You must know that a man like me would rather talk to a he-goat than to a woman, even though I was simply bursting to say something, and to hear a word, a comment, a strong word.

My neighbour took no notice of me at first, and my friendly questions fell on deaf ears. At last I said to him, angrily:

“Eh, Mr. Jew, you leave talking as well as groaning to the women.”



"We were no longer horrified by the dead bodies."

"Why should I groan?" he asked. "From my village we were not driven out. I ran away from it of my own accord."

These words so aroused my curiosity that I was determined to make him speak at all costs. I questioned him and questioned him, until at last, he cried, feebly:

"Oh, leave me alone. Have nothing to do with me. I am a thief, and worse."

"First of all, Mr. Jew," I began, "there can be nothing worse than a thief. Secondly, you are not the man to do any wrong to anybody. I can tell that by the look of you. You can't fool me, you must know. I am a man amongst men, that is to say, I know where I am in the world. You never stole anything in your life. That's what I say, and that's how it is."

"It is true that I never stole anything. Yet, I am a thief, and worse."

"A false accusation, then?"

"Who would accuse me of such a thing? I myself accuse myself."

And again the strange Jew lapsed into silence. It seemed to me that he could not make up his mind whether to speak or not. And, within me, curiosity burned like a fire. Here was a solitary man amongst so many women. And here was I, the only other man in the carriage besides him, yet he would not so much as speak with me. Here was a man who had something to relate, but who would not open his lips. And, at such a time, and in such circumstances, when any man would clutch at a straw to save himself from hearing the wailing and whining! One other man amongst so many women, and he remains silent as a wall. Ugh!

"It's alright, little brother," I said ironically, "if it's a secret you may keep it to yourself. And, maybe, it's better so." And I turned away from him.

When I looked at him again, I found him staring at me with such wild eyes that I was frightened. I thought he was mad. All of a sudden, he began to speak; but wildly, rapidly, excitedly, and loudly. I imagined that the whole train-load of people would hear him. But no one took the least notice. The women cared for nothing at all but their own miseries. They went on moaning and groaning as if no one else was in misery but themselves. And how great the strange Jew's misery was you can gather from his own story.

"Yes," he ejaculated wildly; "yes, let that be my punishment—myself to tell the whole world of my guilt. Let that be my punishment, henceforth. Let the whole world know that I am a thief, and worse—much worse. Yes!

Well, in short, I am a thief who never stole anything in my life. I am a murderer who never hurt a fly in my life. Once only did I sin, once and only once. It happened like this:—

In my village, things had gone so bad that even the richest people were reduced to the level of the earth. The suffering around us became unbearable. Yes, I saw how you looked at the women; how

contemptuously you turned away from them. And I tell you, a real man, with the heart of a man dies when he hears such groans and wails from women and children. I am that sort, anyway. I could not bear to see my wife and children growing pale and thin; and I was distracted when their wailings grew feebler and feebler. I ran about like a lunatic, looking for food for them. Well, it was all no use. Go here, or go there. Stay at home, or fly about. Do what you like. Tear yourself to pieces. I found nothing anywhere. So, I made up my mind to rob; to steal. But there was nothing to rob; nothing to steal. Even the rich widow—Brocha—oh, may a blessing come upon her; even she had given up helping the people. She had nothing to give, and she locked herself up in her house, as if ashamed to show herself in the village. In a mad moment, I thought that she did not lock herself away just so, because she could not help anyone any more. In my madness, I imagined she was simply hiding herself away, so as to eat in peace the food she had stored away, hidden away for herself. And, although I knew that it was nonsense to suspect her of such a thing, yet, when a man is maddened with misery, and when the feeble wailings of his family ring in his ears day and night, he will surely lose his reason. . . .

Well, anyway, to make a long story short, late one night I burst open the door of Brocha's house. By the light of a *groschen* candle, I could see her sitting at the table, her hands folded idly in front of her, and her prayerbook open on the table. She was not reading. She turned round, and looked at me for a moment in silence. The sweat was pouring from me in rivers. I ignored her entirely. As if there was no one in the room, my eyes began searching her cupboards and her drawers. I turned them upside down and inside out. I might have known she had not a crumb of anything in the house; but, my heart was aflame with agony, and I felt like tearing her to pieces for having led me to think she had food hidden away somewhere. And, really, what had she said or done to make me think she had food? Nothing, nothing at all, as I live. Yet, I could not help feeling that she had done me a great wrong.

Presently, she said to me, softly and kindly, as was her way:

"Well, Reuben, we are living in terrible times—such times! May the Most High help us all. I am afraid we have even grown weary of waiting for His loving kindness and His mercy. Is it not so?"

It seemed to me that underneath her calm words, she was meaning to ask me what I was doing in her house; why I was a robber and a thief? And why was I a robber and a thief? It was madness—nothing but madness.

Well, anyway, this way or that, to stand there doing nothing was out of the question. A hellish fire was burning in me, urging me, urging me.

I turned the whole house upside down. There was not a crumb of food anywhere. In my blind madness, I imagined that the very emptiness, the very hunger which Brocha had hidden from the village, was crying out at me: "Shame on you; shame on you, thief, robber,

murderer ! ” But what did I care for that ? I had come to steal, because I was driven to it, and steal I must.

Brocha followed me around the room with her eyes, in which terror, shame, and unshed tears were struggling with one another. She said to me, still speaking tenderly, pityingly, softly :

“ So, Reuben, you have come to rob me ? ”

“ Yes, I have come to rob you,” I shouted back fiercely. I wanted to let her know that she had done me an injury—yes, a life-long injury, by pretending she was better off than anyone else in the village, by hiding her hunger from us, so that I, at any rate, had been led to believe she had food to eat, when, in reality, she was in the same plight as the hungriest of us. Surely, I told myself angrily, surely, if I had known she had not a crumb of anything, I would not have come to her to rob her ? Surely, even in my madness, I would have seen the sin and the folly of trying to take from her that which she had not ?

What with the shame and the disappointment, I was beside myself with rage. I poured out on her a volume of oaths and curses and meaningless words.

“ What a woman can do ? Oh, the devil take all women,” I cried.

“ Oh, what a devil a woman can be in secret, quietly, softly.”

And I went on turning her house upside down, whilst she merely followed my movements with her eyes, in silence, immovable.

At last I made a discovery. I came upon the charity box of Reb Meyer, the wonder-worker.

“ In that box there is money,” I cried, feverishly.

Brocha was like death itself. I saw that she could hardly speak. I was looking at her maliciously, as if to say :

“ See, you thought you could hide it from me. See, I have found something.”

She came over to me ; put her hand on my shoulder, and said, brokenly :

“ Reuben, don’t touch the charity box. Leave me that. Only that I ask for.”

“ So you want it,” I shrieked back. “ You must have money for Reb Meyer, the wonder-worker, must you ? Well, he’s dead, and I’m alive ; and as long as I’m alive, I mean to remain alive. See ? ”

Brocha struggled with me ; not in deeds, nor even in words. She has a heart which bleeds for every wrong, and every drop of pain she sees. She is helpless when her heart is bleeding. She could only look at me. No tongue can describe the agony which was in her eyes, and the ghastliness of her face. In my madness, I imagined that she was over-righteous. She wished rather to give to those who could never repay her, nor even thank her, rather than to us, her neighbours, who might, possibly one day repay her, and who would certainly thank her. And that sort of over-righteousness I never could stand—never !

“ If I am a robber, I must rob,” I cried, venomously.

The next instant I had torn the charity box from the wall, and I was shaking it violently. It was empty. . . .

What was there left me to do but throw the charity box on the floor, and fly from the house? I flew and flew, as if ten devils were chasing me.

And when I heard that a train-load of jews were leaving the village of X—I ran towards it. And here I am. See? . . .

The stranger again lapsed into silence, his head drooping on his breast.

I did not know what to say to him. I wanted to ask him a thousand questions; but I refrained. You see, I know enough of men to understand that when a man vows a vow to punish himself, he will fulfil that vow to the very last drop of blood which is in his veins. After all, a man is a man, and a woman is a woman. A woman thinks only of herself; but a man remembers his duty always. I knew that the stranger would tell me the rest of his own accord. And he did.

Presently he lifted his head, looked about him, and, with a sigh, he said:

“Well, that’s what a woman can do; cover her nakedness. And a man—Yes, I know what you are thinking of. I understand from your shrug that you are thinking all these women are different from Brocha. Maybe you are right. Maybe you are wrong. Anyway I mean to go back to my village, on foot, or how I can, from the next station we stop at, if they will only let me out. That’s all I am bothering myself with—will they let me escape from here?”

“In the south, whither we are going, there is food and quiet,” I remarked.

“It may be; it may be; but I want to go home—back home,” said the stranger. And he burst into a fit of sobbing.

I turned away in disgust from the strange jew, who was, after all, only a tearful old woman.



BALOR.



Adventures of the Gubbaun Saor and his Son.

Re-told by ELLA YOUNG.

FOREWORD.

These tales of the Gubbaun Saor and his Son I heard from story-tellers in Clare, Achill Island, Aranmore, and the Curraun. Anthony Patton told me in Achill the story of the Shortening of the Road, and Patrick Gallagher, of the Curraun, who has by heart so many of the fine traditional sagas and poems told me of Aunya's Bargain with her Father, and the stratagem to learn the Gubbaun's Secret, the Building of the Dun, and again, the Shortening of the Road. The tale of how the Gubbaun got his Craft is from Clare.

I have not altered any incident, but I have amplified the tales, and perhaps spoiled them for some people.

In Dr. Douglas Hyde's *Széáluróe ríor na Seachtmaine* will be found a story of the *Sobán*, taken down as the story-teller told it. *Seosamh Laoiróe* has such another story in his *láb na Cailúige*. To the former I owe Aunya's saying as to the fire, and to the latter her saying with regard to her father's handiwork.

To *Proinnsias Ó Súilleabháin*, of Freiburg University, I am indebted for the incident of the Split Tree.

HOW THE GUBBAUN SAOR GOT HIS TRADE.

TWAS drawing towards night, and the Gubbaun had not given a thought to his sleeping-place. All about him was sky and a country that looked as if the People of the Gods of Dana had been casting shoulder-stones in it since the beginning of time. As far as the Gubbaun's eyes travelled there was nothing but stone; grey stone, silver stone, stone with veins of crystal and amethyst, stone that was purple to blackness; tussocks and mounds of stone; plateaus and crags and jutting peaks of stone; wide endless spreading deserts of stone. Like a jagged cloud, far-off, a city climbed the horizon.

The Gubbaun sat down. He drew a barley-cake from his wallet, and some cresses. He ate his fill and stretched himself to sleep.

The pallor of dawn was in the air when a shriek tore the sleep from him. He sat up: great wings beat the sky making darkness above him, and something dropped to the earth within hand-reach. He fingered it—a bag of tools! As he touched them he knew that he had skill to use

them though his hands had never hardened under a tool in his life. He slung the wallet on his shoulder and set off towards the town.

As he neared it he was aware of a commotion among the townsfolk—they ran hither and thither; they stared at the sky; they clung together in groups.

"What has happened to your town?" said the Gubbaun to a man he met.

"A great misfortune has happened," said the man. "This town, as you can see, has the noblest buildings in the world: poets have made songs about it. Three Master-Builders came to this town—Builders that had no fellows on the ridge of the world. They set themselves to the making of a Marvel, a Wonder of Wonders, a Cause of Astonishment and Envy, a Jewel, a Masterpiece in this town of masterpieces! One pact alone, one obligation they bound with oath on the townsfolk—no living person was to come within the enclosure where they worked; no living person—man, woman, or child—was to set eyes on them when they passed through the town with the tools of their trade in their hands.

It was *SEAS* to them to be looked on.

Three days they were working and passing through the town with the tools of their trade. We had contentment, and luck and prosperity, till the whitening of this dawn. Then a red-polled woman thrust her head forth—my curse on the breed and seed of her for seven generations—she set the edge of her eyes on the Three Master-Builders. They let a screech out of them and rose in the air. They put the shapes of birds on themselves and flew away—my grief, three black crows!

Now the stone waits for the hammer: and the hammer is lost with the hand that held it!"

The Gubbaun tightened his grasp on the wallet, and his feet took him of their own accord away from the town.

"The tools have come to the man who can handle them," said the Gubbaun to himself; "but I'll handle them for the first time where there are fewer tongues to wag."

HOW THE GUBBAUN PROVED HIMSELF.



HE Gubbaun wandered at his own will, as the wind wanders. Every place seemed good to him, because his heart was happy.

He sat by a river cataract and watched the leap of a great king-salmon, silver against the swirling flood.

"My blessing on you, Brother," he cried, "and your own heart's wish to you!"

With that a Pooka lifted himself head and shoulders from the spume. He had put the shape of a white stallion on himself. His eyes were blue like ice.

"If you blessed me," he said, "I could take you to the Land-Under-Wave, to the Plain with Red Blossoms."

"I know that Plain," said the Gubbaun; "but it is work on the world-ridge that I am seeking now. I would prove myself and my tools."

"The sun and wind, the rain and hail will eat into your work. Old age will gnaw at the roots of it. Put your hand on my neck, and your blessing on me!"

"My blessing to you, Brother of mine; White Love of Running Water; White Wave of the Turbulent Sea. I will win you lovers and new kingdoms. You shall be a song in the heart; a dream that slips from city to city; a flame; a whiteness of peace in the murk of battle; a honied laughter; a quenchless delight.

At the last, O my Brother, my hand on your neck."

"Call and I follow, said the Pooka.

I am a Hound whiter than the sun.

A Stag I am with golden antlers.

A Tree I am with silver fruit.

A Voice in the wind's voice I am.

I am running water and growing grass.

Take my blessing, Master-BUILDER; take my blessing, Wonder-Smith."

"If I am sun to-day and you the shadow," said the Gubbaun, "to-morrow you are sun and I the shadow. Day in, day out, let there be love between us—and no farewell."

The Gubbaun shouldered his tools.

Walking at his will, he came to a place where a great chief's dun was a-building. The folk that fashioned it were disputing and arguing among themselves.

"It is right," said one who had an air of authority and a red cloak on him; "it is right that on this lintel there should be an emblem to show the power of the lord of the dun—an emblem to put loosening of joints and terror upon evil-doers."

"It is more fitting," said another, "that the man who carves the emblem should be honoured in it."

"Nay," said a third; "the man who raised the stone should be honoured in it. I myself should be honoured."

So the clash of tongues and opinions went on.

"The blessing of the sun and the colours of the day to you," said the Gubbaun. "Have ye work for a Craftsman?"

"What Craftsman are you," said they, "that come hither a-begging? The world runs after the Master-Craftsman—we have no need of bunglers!"

"I am a Master-Craftsman."

"Hear him!" cried they all. "Where are your apprentices? What duns have you built? What jewels have you carved? Tell us that!"

"A man with ill-cobbled brogues, and burrs in his coat—a likely lie!"

"Put me to the proof," said the Gubbaun, "set me a task!"

"So vagrants talk," said the man in the red cloak, "while good men sweat at labour. Have you the hands of a mason?"

"What need to waste wit and words on this churl?" cried another. "It is time now to stretch our limbs in the sun, and to eat. Let us go to the stream where the cresses are."

They went.

When they were well out of the way, the Gubbaun took his tools. He worked with a will. The work was finished when they straggled back.

The first that caught sight of it cried out: the cry ran from man to man of them. There was hand-clapping and amazement.

The Gubbaun had carved the King—Cat of Keshcorran—more terrible than a tiger! He crouched midway in the lintel, and on either side of him spread a tail: bristling with fierceness it spread, it slid along with insinuating grace and with infinite cunning, losing itself at the last in loops and twists and foliations and intricacies that spread and returned and established themselves in a mysterious magical spell-knotted forest of emblems behind the flat-eared threatening head.

"There is an emblem for the Builder in that," said the Gubbaun, "and an emblem for the Carver, and an emblem for the Man who Planned the Dun, and for the Earth that gave the stone for it. Is it enough?"

"It is enough, O Master-Craftsman, our Choice you are! Our Share of Luck you are! Our Treasure! Stay with us. The chief seat in our assembly shall be yours. The chief voice in our council shall be yours. Stay with us, Royal Craftsman."

"I have the wisdom of running water and growing grass," said the Gubbaun, "and my feet must carry me further—still water is stagnant! May every day bring laughter to your mouths and skill to your fingers: may the cloaks of night bring wisdom."

He left them.

Often he was wandering after that when the sun was proud in the sky—and often when the sun was under the earth. He drank honey-mead in Sidhe-Mounds. He saw the Mountain-Spirits dancing. At last he built a noble habitation for the one daughter that he had and for himself. Aunya was the daughter's name. She had the cleverness of her father, but the Gubbaun's heart was set on a son.

(To be continued).





“‘Sure, my name is good,’ he would say.”

A Great Advertisement.

By BRINSLEY MACNAMARA.

I.

ON the old stage-coach road from Garradrimna to Mullaghowen, one came, about half-way, upon the village, as they called it, of Clunnen, which was situated somewhere about the middle of Ireland. It was, in reality, no village at all, but merely a cross-roads accentuated by a few straggling lanes of cottages and two public-houses, the house of Marcus McInernay, who was a married man with a family, and the house of Ursula Wyse, who was a widow with no one only herself. It was like something always sleeping there by the roadside as one journeyed from Garradrimna to Mullaghowen. . . . Yet, for all that, Clunnen knew a life of its own, perhaps not less in its way than the eager battle that was waged in Garradrimna, or the almost metropolitan magnitude of the wild ways of Mullaghowen. There were very bright-eyed optimists who prophesied a great future for Clunnen. They said that, some day, you might see Garradrimna, tired to death of itself and the place where it was built, taking itself up bodily and coming out the road walking to sit down in contentment by the side of Clunnen. This hopeful word even came to be mentioned at a meeting of the Garradrimna Guardians, where some of the members thinking, as always, in terms of unions and workhouses, spoke of the "amalgamation" of Garradrimna and Clunnen in connection with some long-winded resolution that was *apropos* of nothing at all. . . . And, somehow, the vision became more than a forlorn hope around Clunnen. Clunnen would then put Garradrimna down upon its right-hand side, from whence it could stretch its long legs nearly into Mullaghowen; and Mullaghowen would, maybe, fling out its big feet to tickle the toes of Garradrimna. The three places would have become one—Clunnen, of course.

Hard-faced "Yanks" come back to Clunnen, had their visions, too, of their native place sprung, magically, to the proportions of a city. . . . Quite excited, they would roll their cigars from one side of their mouths to the other. Gee! Some city! And then, immediately, they would see, rising up in their American imaginations, the huge central railway depot of Clunnen—The Grand Central—with its fleets of trains moving north, south, east and west. A continuous boom and clang and roar and hurry, huge negroes yelling the directions to the trains in the magnificent marble hall of The Grand Central. That was America, of course, but this was Clunnen. . . . Gee! Some hole at the back

of beyond ! An immense noontide stillness heavy upon the two public-houses where there was room for only one at a time.

This was a remarkable feature of Clunnen, that, although there was a fairly good business to be done with the pretty considerable population in the fields behind the village, the carters and vanmen and cattlemen going this way every day, as well as the droves of sportsmen passing to the frequent races of Mullaghowen, some curious twist in the economy of the place, or in the nature of the people expressly laid it down that all the business was to be done by one house—at a time.

Presently it was the house of Ursula Wyse that was doing all the business, while Marcus McInernay, they said, was “nearly out on the door.” They held that Mrs. Wyse was a wise woman, meaning no pun, since this form of joking was much too feeble for their sense of humour. But her wisdom was clearly shown in so many ways that they could not escape the impression that it made upon them. The way, for instance, that she kept up the appearance of the place, getting expert, “classy” painters out from Mullaghowen to give it every possible touch of grandeur. How neat and inviting the name “Ursula Wyse” looked in new gilt letters above the door ; while even the outside of Marcus McInernay’s was so dilapidated that you would nearly want to get up on a step-ladder with specs on you to read his name above the door—it was that withered away.

As if in obedience to the general opinion that very soon he would be “out on the door,” Marcus spent most of his mornings leaning against it, in his shirt sleeves, looking out at the signs of Mrs. Wyse’s gathering custom for the day—a useless little lump of a man, as his wife thought of him, smoking a short clay pipe, and never doing a hand’s turn before God or man. After a little while he would revolve himself around and say, “I’m bet !” ; repeating as he went into his empty shop : “Bet, broke, and bewildered !”

Many a morning as he stood thus, calmly filling himself with his accustomed gloom, he would be accosted by Clunnen’s two men of leisure, Padua McHugh and Bartle Boyle. Although customers also of Mrs. Wyse’s, they stuck to Marcus McInernay’s—through some feeling of old allegiance—and because there was another reason. As a result of their chat, he would always feel obliged, in the way of friendliness, to bring them in for a treat. Once securely inside the chat would be bound to develop so heartily that either Padua or Bartle would be emboldened to return the compliment—on credit.

“Sure, my name is good,” he would say.

And, this treat supplied, either Bartle or Padua would have the courage to ask for another on the same terms :

“Put them down in the book, too. Our two good names’ll look very suitable, now, and very nice alongside one another in the one book, and we such chums !”

These two friends of Marcus were a morning torment to Mrs. Julia McInernay. The patent foolishness of that Marcus, and they only

codding him up to his two eyes ! Nor did they find much favour with the children of Marcus, Gertrude McInernay and Norman McInernay, now grown up and nearly marriageable, but denied everything by their father's foolishness and uselessness. Their mother had been responsible for their distinctive christening, hoping thus to qualify them fully for the grandeur she fondly fancied nothing in the world could prevent them having—only for Marcus . . .

There was little wonder that he sought solace from his worries in the conversation of his two old friends. And he had one desperate hope : If a place like Clunnen had notions of lifting up its name, was there any reason why a man like him should not have notions of lifting up his name, too ?

II.

“ Sure, our names is good ! ”

“ It's all in a name ! ”

Marcus had begun to notice that expressions of the nature of these jumped, with great frequency, in and out of all the conversations he would be having with his friends. Even his wife looked up at him from the debris of the account-books she was examining one morning, and said, her eyes filling with tears, which scalded him :

“ Musha, Marcus, sometimes I can't help thinking of the lovely lessons I used to learn at the boarding-school for young ladies, where I prepared myself for this class of a life, God help us ! There was one by Shakspeare—‘ A rose by any other name ’—it went on, and oh ! it was lovely, Marcus, lovely ! Just think of that now—‘ A rose by any other name. ’ ”

He made a hurried escape from the onrushing flood of her tears ; but he could not escape from this matter of the name, which was urging itself upon his consciousness at every turn. A fellow should have a bit of pride in his name. It was all a man had when he had nothing else. And maybe there was as much magic in the name of Marcus McInernay (if only people were made to see it) as in the name of Ursula Wyse. But, he was anonymous, as it were, like a fellow who would be ashamed to put his name at the bottom of a letter to the papers. No wonder the missus was always crying, and the children going pure mad with him.

He put on his coat, and as he went out the door, looked up at the name. It was the final touch to the making up of his mind, that glance. He hurried down to the workshop of Gilbert Price—an ancient man who made a living out of the manufacture of carts, creels, wheelbarrows, and bog-barrows, and who was, as well, an artist in yellow ochre and Prussian blue. The “ classy ” painters of Mullaghowen were beyond him, and so he would have to be content with Gilbert Price. He rushed to business immediately upon entrance to the workshop, and ordered a new name-board in the very best style, to put above his door.

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"Well, and am I going to be ped?" said Gilbert suspiciously, "you know you haven't much of a name."

"You'll be paid," said Marcus, shouting loudly, as if to induce conviction; "even if I have to sell out the shop, lock, stock and barrel, to pay for my own name to go above my own door."

"I'm listening to you, Marcus, but remember this, that the devil an up it'll go until I am, and if I'm not, then back with me again, and every inhabitant of your native village brightening the window with the handkerchief to have a good look at your painted name, and it returning sadly upon my aged shoulder. D'ye see, now, Marcus?"

After this little interview, Marcus found himself focussed into a clearer appreciation of himself, and, as a consequence, was far from being more easy in his mind. Julia could only think of immediate expenditure as immediate loss.

He was, therefore, in a mood to enter for hope of comfort into conversation with the cronies next morning when they bore down upon him from O'Keeffe's corner, almost as soon as he had made his matutinal appearance at the door.

"We're after being down with Gilbert Price," said Padua.

"Is that so?" said Marcus nervously, his tongue beginning to go dry in his mouth.

"And we were more than glad to see that, at long last, you're after taking our advice about the value of a name. It was near time. Gilbert is after executing the most wonderful name-board to yourself, with the letters all curled like and the whole of it decorated with the quarest curio-carics."

"Oh, great Christopher, I didn't think he'd have it finished so soon!"

Bartle and Padua began to speak in turn.

"But, wait a minute."

"What dy'e think, but, after all his most beautiful work, wasn't your grand front name spelt wrong?"

A light of relief jumped into the eyes of Marcus:

"Be gad, then, I have him, I have him!" he cried. "For, dy'e see, when he arrives now, with his magnificent name-board and his threat to make a show of me, I'll frighten the devil out of him with a counter threat of an action for defamation for spelling my name wrong on me, so I will!"

Both Padua and Bartle were forced to exhibit painful grimaces at this exhibition of sheer wrong-headedness and misunderstanding on the part of Marcus.

"Listen!"

"Arrah, listen, will you, to what we have to say? Marquis, M.A.R.Q.U.I.S. was the way he had it spelt instead of M.A.R.C.U.S. And there, now, dy'e see, by a most wonderful stroke of magic, is the solution of all your difficulties ready-made for you in this sudden and marvellous magnification of your name!"

"And is it to go let a yoke like that be put up over my door to have the scuts of Clunnen calling me 'The Marquis McInernay' for a nickname all the dear days of my life? Oh, no, thank you! I'm bad enough as I am."

"Well, even so, 'McInernay, the Marquis,' would sound better than 'McInernay, the Bankrupt,' and the nickname coming on you now might save you from the actual description that'll be surely yours, if you dont look sharp."

"Save me, Oyeh! Come on in. I suppose I'll have to treat you, anyway."

They moved, all three, into the little parlour at the back of the bar. Padua and Bartle appeared quite ready to bubble over with hopeful words. Marcus was silent and gloomy; and even though their conversation this morning promised to concern him, and in a big way, he did not appear able to invite talk with anything like even his ordinary gusto. Then Padua told him something that caused him almost to jump out of his seat with delight.

"But he's not going to charge you anything for painting it, after all."

"What? You don't tell me? Is that so?"

"The devil damn the penny. He says that he believes this is such a gorgeous piece of work that it'll be the means of getting his name up big—like the fellows over in Mullaghowen. A sort of free advertisement for himself, dy'e mind, the ould ruffian!"

Now, if anything like a miracle could have been effected to change the mood of Marcus at the moment it was this word. It blew his immediate worry, the payment of Abraham, from his mind, and, so relieved and hopeful of himself did he appear of a sudden, that the rest was easy enough for Bartle and Padua.

With soft words, they swiftly sketched a rose-hued picture of his future, all full of "The Marquis." They were bright with conviction. Yet they did not quite succeed in chasing every turn of doubting from his mind.

"Oh, I dunno, the devil. It'd be a shocking big venture!" he said as soon as the first flush of his ardour had fled.

"And is it possible that you're going to turn your back on your luck and you nearly out on the door?" This from Padua.

"Are you going to put yourself in the way of never doing another day's good? But, maybe—I say, maybe, you have a taste for settling down in the workhouse. Now, look it, Marcus! I'll put it plain to you! You're aware, I suppose, that people'll believe nearly anything, if only you put it before them in print?" This from Bartle.

"But a fellow has to act up to a name, even when he gets it that way; he has to have a bit of go under him; a bit of swank, and, look at my best suit of clothes, for instance. Look at the trousers!"

He made several gestures of exhibition.

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"Of course, as you have very truly remarked, Marcus, it's all in the acting, and not in the name at all——"

"And about the clothes, Marcus; sure there's many a tailor in the city of Dublin would let you have all the clothes you want for nothing, or, for, I should say, the privilege of being allowed to show off a big gilt-framed yoke in his window saying how he was tailor, By Special Appointment to His Highness or His Grace, or whoever you might be—The Marquis of Clunnen."

"There's not many Marquises publicans and general merchants, I suppose?"

He said this in a shifty, nervous, half-hopeful, half-despondent way.

"All the better, sure, you'll be something new, and novelty sways the world. A Marquis turned publican! Sure, there's many a Marquis would turn worse, if only he could see the future before him that's before you now!"

"America'll go wild and print headings a yard high over the news. Ten to one if you don't see an American Millionairess or Millionaire coming skeddadling over, striving for to pick up the son or the daughter from you."

This last speech was almost a stroke of genius on the part of Padua. It fell intuitively upon one of the strongest inclinations of Marcus, his real desire to do well by his son and daughter—if only something would happen to give him the chance of doing it. Now he was spurred to decision. Seeing that he absolutely must do something, it was just as well to do this, that they were asking him, for all the difference it made.

He took the small black clay pipe of depression from his mouth and smashed it to smithereens, as he struck the table a powerful blow of his fist.

"Boys, howsomever it's going to turn out, yous have me convinced at long last! It's a great idea! It's an absolutely huge idea!"

Bartle was equal, superlatively, to the moment.

"Look at that, now, the most wonderful fortune that was in your name all along, and you never to have seen it until Gilbert Price made the curious blunder. Why, sure, a Marquis is between an Earl and a Duke."

Julia hurried in.

"Begad, this is funny. Gilbert Price is after leaving a new name-board outside without being paid or a haporth. It's spelled ridiculous and painted like the printing on a circus van. What does this mean now? Why didn't you tell me, Marcus?"

She really thought that he was the old Marcus whom she was speaking to. He saw this, and arose to make his first tremendous effort to prove that he was not. If only he could convince his wife—there was no possibility of the "Marquisate" that he might not be able to develop. But no man is ever a hero to his valet, or his wife, especially of a sudden, and after long years of struggling and defeat.

"Ahem! I suppose, now, Julia, you'd never credit me with having ere a drop of blue blood in my veins at all? What?"

"Well, indeed?"

"No, of course not. Well, I may tell you that I'm just after discovering, for the purpose of business, commerce, and enterprise, that I'm a—a sort of Marquis."

"A what?"

"A Marquis, no less. Marquis McInernay. The Marquis of Clunnen—if you'll take my word for it."

"Well, there now! Imagine that! And I'm the Marchioness, we'll suppose, doing a big book business in the drinking line, and nothing in the till, and I not to get a new dress those three year."

"Oh, but we're going to change all that. Mebbe it's what you'd see yourself sitting beside me yet, and I driving around inside my coach and four, and I in robes and uniform, and a shiny knee-breeches and a sash and a sword, and the people of Clunnen bowing an scraping salutes to me—the very same as you'd see the King, for instance, on the cinematograph. I'm going to put up the name-board exactly as it's spelled and printed, and, and——"

"And you have only to exhibit a thing sufficiently long in print, ma'am, for people to believe it, even though it may be the damndest lie in Christendom," said Padua, coming to the assistance of Marcus.

He was ably seconded by Bartle.

"A name for wisdom, ma'am, after all, has nothing like the attraction of a name for nobility. This won't be long finishing off the Widow Wyse. It'll put the kybosh on her completely!"

It was probably the unaccustomed air of decision about Marcus rather than the extravagant notion of the moment that convinced Julia; but certainly she appeared impressed. Marcus was keen to notice this, and said:

"Well, what dy'e think of me, now, Julia?"

"Well, begad, I thought I'd never be inclined to remember Shakespeare again, and I looking at you. But I can't help thinking of that passage—'A rose by any other name.' And I won't have to be nearly crying my eyes out when I remember it now."

The miracle was wrought. Marcus had already begun to be accepted as "The Marquis."

"You won't put any crying doubts before me any more, Julia, he said, and I, as it were, going to put on the mantle of my Marquisate—get us three pints, now, and put them down in the book to The Marquis."

III.

The setting-up of the name-board fell as a rather poor joke upon Clunnen. But when the laughter, which held also a sound of jeering, appeared at length to die down, Padua and Bartle began to enforce themselves as publicity agents on behalf of Marcus:

"D'ye know where we're after been?" they would say, running into one house after another. "Well, we're just after being up at the Marquis's."

"What Marquis?" the people used to say at first, with a tremendous sneer.

"What Marquis?" either Bartle or Padua would repeat, without the least flicker of a smile; surely you're not that ignorant, the Marquis of Clunnen, who else?"

"The Marquis" or "The Marquis of Clunnen," were words scarcely ever out of their mouths. They fully believed in the virtue of hammering a thing in well. But it was hard work, especially in the case of a local man, who had been known to them all as "Marcusheen McInernay."

At last, one fine Sunday, their efforts in publicity began to show signs of having effect. People from Garradrimna and Mullaghowen who were out for the day, and who had heard the extraordinary story of "The Marquis," were eager at least to see the name above the door. They stopped their bicycles or their cars or their motor-cars outside, and, looking up saw that the amazing cheek of the man was a fact. They would have to see "The Marquis" for themselves. But, just yet a little while "The Marquis" was not to be seen. He had employed Bartle and Padua as doormen, first of all as a recompense for their having made him a "Marquis," and, in the second place, because they were most reliable men who could be depended on to say without turning a hair:

"Oh, 'The Marquis' is not quite himself to-day. He's slightly indisposed. But if you were to come next Sunday—or some other Sunday——"

Curiosity, thus cleverly created and developed, brought an ever increasing crowd in long cars and motor cars and char-a-bancs, and the broad grin of a full-blooded scepticism was soon turned upon the face of Clunnen. It was impressed by the spectacle of this "acceptance" of "The Marquis" on the part of strangers—grand, smart people from Garradrimna and Mullaghowen. Maybe this was the beginning of its own magnification, of which it had always fondly dreamt; and it was as well to be on the safe side. So, reluctantly, Clunnen began to follow the crowd.

Marcus, for all his earlier foolishness and uselessness, was not without a good deal of commonsense, when face to face with an opportunity, so the very first money he made out of "The Marquisate" he began to use towards its further development. He had the shop thoroughly painted and renovated, both inside and outside, by "classy" painters from Mullaghowen, and the name-board further tremendously embellished by Gilbert Price. He had snappily-printed hand-bills done for general distribution, and large three-colour posters, prominently featuring his name, drawn for exhibition in particular places. He had it printed on a recently ordered supply of tea-bags—THE MARQUIS OF CLUNNEN. These words stared you heavily in the eye no matter which way you turned.

There was no more chance of escaping them, they said, than there was of escaping the sun in the sky.

And behind all this terrific outward show was "The Marquis" himself; well-dressed, important, silent, inaccessible, and ably assisted by his business advisers—Padua and Bartle. The hidden population of Clunnen, the carters, the vanmen, the cattlemen, the tramps, and the droves of sportsmen passing to the frequent races in Mullaghowen, were now his to a man. It now appeared to Clunnen that its natural leader had at last arisen—the man of business genius who was destined to realise its dream of the ultimate absorption of Garradrimna and Mullaghowen. Look at the way he was flinging himself out far and wide; the whole world would know of him shortly! The house of Ursula Wyse was gone to the dogs, anyway—no one going into it—no class.

Marcus fell psychologically upon the moment with the creation of a tremendous illusion of respectability. He dressed better and better, and behaved more and more splendidly from day to day. And, fully convinced, many a one would say:

"Sure, I suppose, now, he's one of the most respectable men in Europe, and it's nearly a pity to see him only a Marquis!"

But, Mrs. Julia McInernay, "The Marchioness," who knew her man better than any of them, was not quite happy. One morning she approached Marcus with her new trouble:

I thought, as sure as anything, that when we'd begin to do well, all my worries would be over. But now the shop is always so full of people that Norman and Gertrude are not able to attend them all."

"Let them wait. It's what they should be glad of the privilege of being allowed to wait in 'The Marquis of Clunnen's.'"

"To be sure, but all the same it does not look well to Gertrude and Norman working in the shop and they the son and the daughter of a Marquis. People coming into the shop are beginning to give out cuts and hints. If they're not smart enough to understand advertising, they're gabby enough to talk about what they can see."

There was sense in this complaint which was not lost on Marcus. He immediately conferred with his advisers. And, as a swift result, a barmaid and a shopboy were immediately employed, while Norman and Gertrude, almost in complete fulfilment of their aristocratic names, were soon to be seen going off every day to play golf and tennis with the *elite* of Mullaghowen.

This, as a convincing proof that a successful man cannot possibly make a mistake, was all to the good, for Norman and Gertrude had got "a bit too stuck-up for the shop," and were occasionally most insulting to good customers. But now, arrived in their true sphere, they were of really better business value. People seeing them go about idle and magnificent, would say:

"There's the Marquis of Clunnen's son!" or "There's the Marquis's daughter! Such style! The father must be doing terrific. But,

sure, he has a great shop and a great name. I must go over there to-morrow for a supply of things."

IV.

Events, not all full of brightness, hurried in upon "The Marquis." Only a very little while had elapsed, and yet he found that his son and daughter had almost superseded Padua and Bartle as advertising agents for the business. But in proportion to their value they were disproportionately expensive. There was no standing Norman until he got a motor-car, and, with Gertrude, it was a continuous spilling-out of money for new dresses.

"Lord, it's shocking expensive to be a swell! Mrs. McInernay would say, about one-hundred-and-forty times a day; and Marcus, too, was not blind to the big mistake he had really made in substituting Norman and Gertrude for Padua and Bartle, and the hand-bills, and the three-colour ads., not to speak of the elaborate name-board by Gilbert Price. They were now living beyond their means, and this was nearly as bad as when they had been doing nothing in the shop only pulling the devil by the tail. They had a name, of course, and this was a great thing, but a situation had been created in which the name could only be maintained by extraordinary expenditure in the direction of "advertising," which must increase rather than decrease, if they were to stand at all. And yet the business, such as it was, could not bear this. It had reached almost the full extent of its expansion. Yet, such was the nature of the circumstances immediately surrounding it that the present "advertising staff" could not be dispensed with without causing complete collapse of the very foundations upon which it was built. If Gertrude put on a less expensive dress than her last one it would be noticed. If Norman showed the least trace of retrenchment in his lavish behaviour it would be noticed. And from this point the decline of "The Marquisate" would begin. Why the faintest suspicion of decline would cause its immediate fall. Yet the very thing which sustained it must also, and of a certainty, cause its sudden collapse if another miracle did not happen to put it upon a more solid foundation.

There was a distant ray of hope in the situation, but it was of such a nature as almost clouded its own splendour. There were two good matches waiting "red-hot and ready" for Norman and Gertrude. Ursula Wyse, in the face of her almost ruin, had remained a wise woman. If only she could capture Norman, "The Young Marquis," she felt that the amount of "nobility" he would bring as a commercial alliance to her "wisdom" might easily be the means of causing her business to boom again—and fully repay her for making a fool of herself. She got Padua to mention the matter to Marcus, who was much struck by the excellence of the idea as one way of escape from the present onrushing crisis. Then

there was Mortimer Geoghegan, the retired draper, who lived in a fine place, half-way between Clunnen and Garradrimna—a good, solid, sensible man of fifty-five, with tons of money. Getting flighty in the dawn of his old age, he had become altogether fascinated by Gertrude, “The Young Marchioness,” and went so far as to approach Bartle, so that he might talk it over with Marcus, who saw in it another excellent way of escape while there was yet time. But, what could be done, seeing that the minds of his children were set upon some gorgeous “lord” or “lady” out of Mullaghowen, and not upon the likes of these? And it would be madness for the moment to attempt to forbid them the foolishness of their ways.

“Uneasy lies the head that wears a crown,” he would say to himself, over and over again.

Then, suddenly, a happy accident came to divert the mind of Marcus from his worries. One morning a number of American journalists swooped down upon him in search of “copy.” They “just wanted to write the ‘story’ of his life, to have it syndicated all over the earth.” This event of itself, particularly at this moment, was sufficiently impressive as not to be lost on Clunnen. Any little doubts concerning “The Marquisate” that might have begun to creep in were at once dispelled. Wasn’t he a great man entirely, to have about the place? Clunnen had helped him to get up his name, and now he was returning the compliment in his grand way by helping to make Clunnen famous all over the world. Of course, it had always known that this would be so. But, all the same, so near realisation, it appeared as a big blow to Garradrimna and Mullaghowen, and their blessings fell down on the head of “The Marquis.”

After the departure of the “American interviewers,” who were really a few smart shop-boys from Castleconnor, brought over by Padua and Bartle to ease the situation, Marcus spent a few days anxiously closeted with his advisers. Then, to the consternation of the whole household, he emerged a grievously changed man. He nearly frightened the life out of his wife, Julia, by showing a complete inability to recognise her; he passed Norman and Gertrude, as if they had become complete strangers. He began to ramble in his talk, using queer, high-flown words, like what one would meet in novels dealing with mediaeval chivalry. “Beshrew me!” and “Methinks” and “Varlet,” were amongst the expressions almost continually upon his tongue. He talked of the shop as “my castle,” and spoke of buying a new suit of armour and a sword. “To slay mine enemies!” he replied to a question of Julia’s as to “what on earth he wanted with a sword now, and it such a dangerous-looking yoke?”

Then what had happened fully dawned upon the wife of Marcus. *He really thought that he now actually was what he had been only letting on to be.* The strain of acting the part had driven him off his head. This was a terrible calamity to have happened just now, when she had so

many anxious thoughts of settling the children advantageously, seeing that they had lifted themselves so splendidly into the way of getting good matches, and before the "smash" came. But this was the much-dreaded "smash" in earnest. If the rumour of insanity in the family got abroad ! She was distracted.

Through the next few days she, with Norman and Gertrude, were faced with a desperate task, that of hiding "The Marquis" from the eyes of the public, for fear of the consequences. Wildly seeking for some way out of the distressful situation, she was driven to speak of the matter to Bartle and Padua :

"As sure as day, it was them lads from America, with their interviewing and their autobiographing. Peculiar and all as Marcus was he looked sane enough until he heard of his name going out broadcast like that. This Marquising is after being the greatest curse from start to finish ; but if we have to give it up now we're ruined entirely. . . ."

The advisers appeared much perturbed and eager to help the whole family, now face to face with the great calamity of the collapse of "The Marquisate." There were many anxious conferences between Padua and Ursula Wyse ; between Bartle and Mortimer Geoghegan ; between both the diplomatists and Mrs. McInernay, and even between Norman and Gertrude, who, having fallen into the ways of ease, had no wish to desert them, even if it meant a sacrifice such as marrying for comfort with two elderly people, instead of for love to two who would be young and delightful and belonging to "the upper ten."

V.

By what now appeared a heaven-sent chance for everybody, including Mortimer Geoghegan and Ursula Wyse, who were almost distraught with worrying, that, since the "Americans" appeared anyhow, the two upon whom they had set their hearts were sailing far beyond them, the madness of "The Marquis" took a promising turn. He spoke of a "banquet" to Bartle and Padua, calling them "Sir Bartle" and "Sir Padua," and saying that they might bring their friends, any particular friends of theirs they liked to be equally honoured. And immediately they knew, and Mrs. McInernay knew, the "friends" they would bring.

"To get my two little childer settled is, mebbe, all that this cursed Marquising was ever meant for. Ursula Wyse or Mortimer Geoghegan would never have thought of them only for the grand way our good fortune enabled them to get on. And when I have them settled—mad or not mad—I'll make Marcus give up the whole thing. For it's surely a shocking strain on their nerves for anyone to be striving to make themselves out something that they're not. And sure if himself was only to retire with his great name still strong upon him it might be something to live on for the remainder of our days."

"Begad, you're a great woman, entirely!" said Padua with enthusiasm. If another woman got to be a Marchioness, all of a sudden, she would have gone madder than himself, and then where would the both of you be landed by this time?"

On the day preceding the evening of the "banquet" "The Marquis" was very bad. His conduct in and around the shop had the effect of finally desolating any lingering hopes which Norman and Gertrude might have had of his recovery, with its consequent survival of their aristocratic state. They were only too anxious to marry almost anyone now, to save themselves, their only worry being that they might not be able to keep their father hidden away until the matches were quite settled this evening. So, when the suitors arrived, full of anxiety for the success of their plans they were agreeably surprised and flattered to find themselves meeting with no difficulty at all.

With the able assistance of Bartle and Padua the two matches were settled before they were well inside the house—even to the fixing of the wedding days, and the places where the honeymoons were to be spent. It was a great moment for Mrs. McInernay, and Padua and Bartle discreetly withdrew, so that she might have full enjoyment of it.

They moved into the little parlour at the back of the bar, where they had had so many pleasant conversations in the poor, but contented mornings that were gone. They were confronted by "The Marquis" himself—a bottle of champagne held neckwise in his hand, and a broad smile over all his countenance.

"Well, boys?" he said.

"Musha," said Padua, "will you tell us if its yourself that's in it at all, or only the shadow of a lunatic?"

"Oh, I'm all right, the whole of me, brains and bones. Why?"

"The Lord save us," said Bartle; "we thought you were mad, out and out, you acted the part that damn well."

"Hold your glasses, boys. This stuff wasn't a bad help; but it's the last bottle I'll take, for it's the last bottle that's in it. Well, boys, it was a great idea, right enough—one of the best yous ever thought of; I to let on I was mad, to get Norman and Gertrude to stop their gorgeous gallop through the country and settle down to my advantage."

"To develop the 'Marquising' to the full shocking limit, was our advice to you," said Padua, "and you followed it well, nearly deceiving ourselves also, as well as poor Julia. She's now happy, for the first time in her life, congratulating her childer and her childer to be."

"That's very satisfactory, and, so far so good," said Marcus, taking a long, shrewd look at both, "but what would you advise me to do now, boys, for now comes the crux of all my Marquising?"

They pondered the problem in silence for a few moments. At length Bartle spoke:

"Now, if you were to retire, sell out the place to some big business lad in Garradrimna or Mullaghowen. There would be a lot of them

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only too glad to have a leg at the chance of it now, and it having such a trade."

"No use, Bartle. I as 'The Marquis' am the whole thing. The whole contraption would fall asunder in a week without my name behind it, and then my name, dy'e see, would go down worse than ever with this downfall, and my new son-in-law and my new daughter-in-law mightn't like it at all."

"Therefore," said Padua, "if you were to retire in the full blast of the Marquisate it would be a most powerful thing for all concerned. People would have a kind of respect for you then as long as you'd be alive. And, anyhow, don't you want to give your son a chance of distinguishing himself in business now as the husband of Mrs. Wyse?"

"Good health, boys; my couple of Wise men from the East; my Cabinet Ministers; my Privy Councillors, and, is it possible, that you don't see the solution that's all grandly fixed up and waiting, just made for me like a new suit of clothes by my appointed tailor in the city of Dublin. Whisper, boys, for a second. What about what you talked of as being the probable end of me, not so long ago? Bankruptcy?"

"What?"

"What?"

"Well, it's only the other day that I was reading on the paper where it was after happening to a Duke, and before him to an Earl, and before him again to six or seven plain Lords, and before them again to sixteen or seventeen Sirs. You see, it's quite the thing, and very swanky. 'A great soul,' they will say, 'and a great business man entirely; but, sure, he had to rush himself into a lot of extraordinary expense when he found out that he was a Marquis.' And they'll have great respect for me as the man that done the world and got the better of all my difficulties and settled my two childer well. 'There's the Marquis of Clunnen, a grand man, they will say, when in my retirement I'll pass from my son-in-law's to my daughter-in-law's, and poor Julia'll be real contented at long last and we'll be all doing well. And when I'm dead and gone, if they ever succeed in starting to make anything out of Clunnen, which, of course, I don't believe they ever will, what better beginning can they make than by putting up a monument to myself? And there I will be forever, as a grand encouragement to others. The Marquis himself, no less, in silk stockings and a sash and a sword. For all time——"

"The Marquis of Clunnen," added Padua, in tones of genuine admiration.

"The Marquis of Clunnen," added Bartle, in tones of deep respect.

Three Italians.

PAPINI—CROCE—D'ANNUNZIO.

"THE Italians," said Mr. Belloc the other day, parenthetically—was it in his lecture in Dublin?—"who have done everything better than anyone else." We need not be sensible of any extravagance in this statement if we regard history as a whole, and consider such supreme instances of varied genius as Leonardo de Vinci, Dante, Machiavelli and Napoleon. But Mr. Belloc intended, as his context showed, to be in some degree prophetic; for he added in allusion to the comparative decline of the Italian reputation in modern times, "all that they (the Italians) have lacked was unity, and now that they have unity, they are going to give us some surprises." The inference is that with her battles of liberation in the last century Italy did not altogether achieve a sense of nationhood; it needed her participation in the recent European war, with its sequel, the appearance of Signor Mussolini and the patriot Fascisti, to complete the work of national unity. Most Italians will agree that Cavour, Victor Emmanuel, Garibaldi and Mazzini, the nineteenth century leaders and prophets of Italian grandeur and unity left behind them something for their successors to accomplish; as to whether the task is now accomplished, with Italy in possession of the last of her unredeemed territories and a Mussolini as patriot dictator—of this some Italians are sceptical. The foreigner can but wait and see. But it is certainly true that in the last twenty years Italy has offered many signs of national revival; politically and materially, her situation has often been ambiguous, and may still be so; but intellectually and in a cultural sense, she is again, not indeed supreme in western Europe, but a worthy competitor with France, Germany and England.

The three names at the head of this essay are representative of the Italian genius in its varied aspects. Both in Italy and outside, the consensus of opinion "places" d'Annunzio, Croce, Papini as the three most interesting and accomplished of living Italian writers. In conjunction, they remind us of the individualistic nature of the Italian. In talents and feeling no three men could well be more dissimilar than d'Annunzio, poet, novelist, and excessive patriot, Croce, the philosopher, with his disentangling mind, vast erudition, his rock-like adherence to certain cardinal ideas; Papini, a restless, sceptical searcher for some certainty of belief, whom no modern movement has satisfied or left untouched. In practical life, too, these men have been divided. Croce was a Neutralist in 1914; he has been a member (Minister of Fine Arts)

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in the Cabinet of old Signor Giolitti, who had once to hide from the interventionist fury of the Roman populace. D'Annunzio's admirers claim that it was he chiefly who brought Italy into the war; and the romance of the poet's achievements at Fiume stirred two continents. Papini has talked of politics, as he has talked of everything else under the sun; but he is an Italian Hamlet, and does not proceed to action. With his bitter tongue he has lashed at times the theatricality, as it seems to him, of d'Annunzio, the self-content of Croce and his school of erudite critics.

Of the three, Papini is the youngest; now a man of between forty and fifty he started early to write, and had material for a spiritual autobiography when still in the early thirties. I do not think this autobiography, *Un Uomo Finito*, has yet been translated into English; yet it is Papini's most remarkable book, with the possible exception of his recent *La Storia di Cristo*. He has also written prose poems and innumerable essays; he has constituted himself at moments the standard-bearer of new programmes in literature—he is a Florentine, and Florence has been the home of new movements, including the programme of the Futurists. In *Un Uomo Finito*, a very vigorously written work, Papini tells us of many things; of the various phases of belief and disbelief, despair and hope through which he passed from childhood onwards; of the mediocre conditions in which he was nurtured; of his enormous reading; of his early literary efforts; of Tuscany, the countryside that was his own—not rich, tropical, perfumed like d'Annunzio's; but naked, melancholy, *moral*, with its “strong and clear rock”; its plain, “honest” flowers, “resolute cypresses,” that seemed to him so much more beautiful than any southern landscape of palms, oranges, and whitened dust. A bitter and gloomy temper did not preclude the cloudiest ambitions; Papini was born, like Nietzsche, who was at one time his master, with the “malady of grandeur”—

This is my first recollections: I must have been eight or nine years old. . . . I found one day the story of Petrarch's coronation in the Capitol, and I read and re-read it. “I, too, I, too,” I kept saying to myself, although I knew not precisely why the crown had been put on the head of the corpulent poet. . . . I made my father take me to the Viale dei Colli. When I got there, I picked from the low shrubs some evergreen foliage. I was not sure that it was the famous laurel; but that did not matter. Returning home, I shut myself in my little room . . . and made from the foliage a sort of crown which I put on my head, throwing over my shoulders a great red rag, and commenced to walk along the walls singing a mournful drawn-out ditty which to me seemed quivering and heroic.

Un Uomo Finito is not among the greatest of books; but as an accurate account of the inward processes of so many of Papini's contemporaries,

it will be always read and valued by the men of Papini's generation, in every country. There are wonderful things in it, particularly those that picture the effect on the nervous system of intellectual subjects, of certain philosophical ideas, when comprehended for the first time—the chapter on the discovery of Berkeley and the passage to an absolute solipsism, is a good example. But from the various essays and reviews which Papini later on collected and published, essays and reviews touching on all the systems of thought, every attitude towards life, ancient and modern, this mood of surrender and docility is wholly absent. He plays skittles with all the philosophers, particularly with the most respected of the moderns, most particularly of all with his own contemporary and countryman, Benedetto Croce. Only Nietzsche and Bishop Berkeley (a strange conjunction) retain a certain measure of his respect. There is an interesting allusion in the essay on Berkeley, showing Papini's wide range, on the effect of Irish atmosphere on the Bishop's views of the Catholic Church. In the same volume, which contains the essay on Berkeley is a picturesque account of the overwhelming influence of Whitman's poetry on a young man; we note once more Papini's responsiveness to northern influences—yet, look at his portrait, surely he is a Mediterranean man, if ever there was one! These essays, with their delight in argument, in the besting of an opponent, reveal the pugnacious side of Papini's personality. In *La Storia di Cristo* alone Papini tries to be persuasive, to “convert” the reader to his own thought and mood. It is the book of a Catholic, without reservations. But it is written not for those of simple faith, who have never doubted, but for “the indifferent, the profane, the artists.” A book that is to be classed a work of piety, a devotional work, distinguished from such other works of modern date in that its author has (as he observes modestly) “some notion of the art of writing and of poetry!”

Much of Papini's bitterness of disillusion has been expended, as we have seen on the secular philosophers; it has left unmoved the most celebrated of secular philosophers now living. Croce continues his voluminous work at Naples, expounding Hegel, developing his own theory of aesthetics, studying in the light of fixed principles all Italian literature, all Italian history. His “Aesthetics as the Science of Expression” is still the foundation of his high renown. What dozens of young art critics, dramatic critics, literary critics of London owe to this book, has never been computed. Older men, too—for Mr. Walkeley of *The Times* took up Croce long ago, and showed that one can write about him as merrily as one can write about Aristotle. Briefly, Croce discovered, like the man in Moliere's play, that we are all talking prose without knowing it. Art is pure intuition—and intuition is simply expression; to have many and important things in one's mind, and not to succeed in expressing them, is a thing which simply doesn't happen. Philosophy includes fantasy (art); but fantasy has nothing in it of philosophical concepts. Art is the earlier function of the theoretic spirit; but it is not its supreme

function, as those who would make of art a religion, assert—for it is only by virtue of philosophy, the supreme form of that spirit, that one can exalt art, as the poets do, at the expense of abstract science, finding in the one reality and in the other mere utility. Art, in a word, is the “dream of the life of knowledge.” To these assertions Croce finds his way mainly by the process of exhaustion, exposing the falsities of previous theories and proving their truths to be in accord with his own theory.

Croce trusts to philosophy; he believes it can supply answers to all our problems, as befits an Hegelian. But he is not a mere expounder of Hegel, as the title of his book, *What is Living and Dead in the Philosophy of Hegel*, indicates. Here he makes the point that Hegel failed to distinguish between opposites and distincts in his dialectic: this discovery, as has been sardonically observed, leaves this wicked non-Hegelian world quite cold. But he also joins issue with Hegel on the subject of aesthetic activity; for although Hegel did not take the vulgar view of art, as a game or pastime, or an instruction in ethics, he did regard art as an imperfect form of philosophy, and consequently as a past or survival of the past, something that will become superfluous. For Croce art is autonomous; the “lyric or the music of the spirit;” “intuition without intellectual relations;” the “emotion which a poem communicates, through which there opens a view of reality, which we cannot render in intellectual terms, and which we possess only in singing, or re-singing it, that is, only in creating it.”

More than half of Croce's original “*Estetica*” is occupied by a minute and very learned history of his predecessors in the theory of art. The argumentative chapters are relatively few, and devoted to the simple idea that art equals expression. But he developed the idea further in a lecture at Heidelberg (1908); it is in this lecture that the above-quoted passages will be found. The lecture was reprinted in his *Problems of Aesthetics*, to the opening chapter of which readers who want a first grasp in the Crocean philosophy of aesthetics may be recommended. Here Croce added lyricism to his conception of the character of art. Critics had pointed out that one did not ask of an artist merely that he should instruct in real facts or thoughts, or that he should astonish by the wealth of his imagination; but also that he should have a personality by which the mind of the listener or the spectator is warned: an unique personality. Croce accepted the argument, and, indeed, sought to show that it was implicit in his original doctrine. But by “personality” understand something ideal and spontaneous, not willed and empirical (it is indifferent, Croce pleads in another place, that in our interpretation of Shakespeare's art we know so little of his private life, his opinions, etc.).

Croce is not a dull writer, and his theory of aesthetics is enlivened by many flashes of sardonic humour. Take, for instance, this allusion to the very scientific, very modern and gross idea that art resides in the need of the male to conquer the female—an idea that has been exposed

with great erudition and many anecdotes—God knows how reliable ! on the customs of savage peoples :

But in truth there is no need for such evidence, seeing that poets who adorn themselves with their poetry like cocks who glory in their combs, or turkeys spreading their tails, are constantly met with in ordinary life. But, whoever does these things, and in so far as he does them, is not a poet, but just a poor devil (if you like), a poor devil of a cock and turkey hen ; and the longing for the conquest of the female has nothing to do with the fact of art.

Croce has republished in several volumes of minute and judicial appreciations on the " Literature of New Italy," covering a period of 70 or 80 years and leaving out of account no reputation, however minor. It is here that one will find an essay on the most famous of his compatriots now living—or he who was most famous before the emergence of Mussolini—d'Annunzio.

I come to d'Annunzio last in this article, and leave him the least space, because, after all, there are few readers of modern books who have not some conception of d'Annunzio's range and scope, the quality of his art and mind. It is as a novelist and dramatist that d'Annunzio is best known outside of Italy, though latterly also as a political idealist and patriot. The faults of the novels and dramas have often been exposed—never better, I think, than by a critic of (so called) Anglo-Saxon origin, Henry James. They have a certain vulgarity, an artistic vulgarity, to be sure—one must not make the mistake (though one is prone to in a case like d'Annunzio) of disliking the artist on the man's account. Tremendous things happen in these books, " terrific surpassings of good and evil ; " but the characters don't correspond with it all. They are often common and trivial, empty of significant content ; one cannot sympathise with their passions. Insincerity is alleged against d'Annunzio—and, of course, foreigners lift their hands and say : " Here, how typical he is of an Italian ! " But it is not a question of insincerity. Croce, who cannot have any temperamental sympathy with the novelists' choice of subject, says in his essay that d'Annunzio is far more sincere than many writers who have a reputation for sincerity. Croce speaks also of the " cruel curiosity " which alone suffering inspires in him. He reproduces the horror of suffering without pity. There is, however, a tenderness in much of his poetry, in several pieces of his *Laudi*, for example—a volume that is the supreme instance of his lyrical genius, fixing him as the greatest of living poets, and assuring his immortality. His poetry, too, like his novels, is characterised by that extraordinary responsiveness to direct expressions of sound, sight, and odour, which lifts the worst of his writings above mediocrity. His recent political career, his prophetic speeches and manifestoes, illustrate his inexhaustible spiritual energy : Renew oneself or die, has always been his device. The war has left him, as it left Papini, dissatisfied ; both men profess a disgust of triumphant materialism ; but whereas Papini sees in the struggle for natural greatness nothing but a struggle for riches, for

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d'Annunzio the escape from the material lies in patriotism—an ideal not yet attained. One cannot easily discover any logical principle connecting d'Annunzio's eloquent plea for Italian greatness (which he names spiritual, but which is to be accompanied by military conquest and territorial expansion) with his praise of Indian rebels and the "little martyr" of Sinn Féin ; in his last book, *Per L'Italia degli Italiani*, he counsels Italy to turn her gaze eastward and forsake the West, now dominated by the Anglo-Saxon (Ireland notwithstanding) and sunk into a brutal materialism. We do not expect from d'Annunzio a consistent political thought, although he once drew up an admirable Constitution for Fiume and has laid his finger unerringly on some of the uglier aspects of Fascismo. He would be the Cæsar of the New Italy, the people's leader, as Mussolini is the Pompey. He has defined his *Francesca di Rimini* as a poem of luxury and blood, and something of this taste is left in the mouth by his war recitals. He has examined with "cold curiosity" the horrors he saw at the Front, or saw others endure. But his mind has not been "dried up" by politics ; and he can still write about Italy as beautifully as he did twenty years ago, when moved purely as a poet he welcomed the young king, who received news of his accession on a voyage :—

Giovine, che assunto dalla Morte
fosti re nel Mare,
or mourned the Italian sailors killed in China :—
Chi ti vide, dopo l'alta
gesta, vivere nel mare
col grande tuo corpo fecondo
Chi sentì nella tua calda
giovinezza palpitare
l'antica speranza del mondo.

Veduto non han Gallura
né il Mar Ligure né l'Adria
Morendo su l'orride porte,
Ma veduto han la figura
grande e Dola della Patria
risplendere sopra la morte.



"Once at a Sunday-school pic-nic."

Sunday Morning.

Outside the sunlight, outside the summer wind revelled.
Revelled and called to them, where behind dust-covered windows
They chanted
Their evening hymn.
(Though it was morning.
Their thoughts were an evening hymn.)
Then sudden—I heard it, I swear to you,
Sheer through the well restrained bassos—
Sheer through the delicate
Modestly mantled sopranos,
A naked voice,
A woman's voice, joyously naked
Responsive to sunlight and summer wind suddenly trilled.
Even so it is rumoured that once at a Sunday-school pic-nic
In well-restrained gaiety nicely arranged by a river
Broke suddenly out of the forest
A naked fawn.
Paused for a moment
With wonder—arched eyebrows,
Then, over the summer grass tripping
On delicate hooves,
Vanished again in the forest.

S. O'S.

Etched in Moonlight.

By JAMES STEPHENS.

CHAPTER I.

HE waved his pipe angrily.

"Words," he said. "They dope us with words, and we sleep on them and snore about them. So with dream. They issue tomes about it, and they might as well issue writs for all the information they give."

I halted him there, for I respect science and love investigation.

"They don't claim to give answers to the riddles of existence," I expostulated, "their business is to collect and classify the facts that are available, and when a sufficient number of these have been gathered there is usually found among them an extra thing which makes examination possible."

"Hum!" said he.

"The difficulty lies in getting all the facts; but when these are given much more is given; for if a question can be fully stated the answer is conveyed in the question."

"That's it," said he; "they don't know enough, but there is a wide pretence——"

"More a prophecy than a pretence. They really state that this or that thing is knowable. It is only that you live hurriedly, and you think everything else should be geared up to your number."

"So they are, or they would not be visible and audible and tangible to me. But a ghost is geared differently to me; and I think that when I am asleep and dreaming I am geared differently to the person who is talking to you here."

"Possibly."

"Certainly. Look at the time it has taken you and I to chatter our mutual nonsense. In an instant of that time I could have had a dream; and, in its infinitesimal duration, all the adventures and excitements of twenty or forty years could take place in ample and leisurely sequence. Someone has measured dream, and records that elaborate and complicated dreams covering years of time can take place while you would be saying knife."

"It was du Prell," I said.

"Whoever it was—I've seen a person awake and talking, but sleepy; noted that person halt for the beat of a word in his sentence, and continue with the statement that he has had a horrible dream. It must have taken place in the blink of an eye. There is no doubt that while we are asleep

a power is waking in us which is more amazing than any function we know of in waking life. It is lightning activity, lightning order, lightning intelligence ; and that is not to be considered as rhetoric, but as sober statement. Last night I had a dream, and in it twenty good years were lived through with all their days and nights in the proper places ; and a whole chain of sequential incidents working from the most definite beginning to the most adequate end—and perhaps it all took place between the beginning and the ending of a yawn.”

“ Well, let us have the dream,” said I ; “ for it is clear that you are spoiling to tell it.”

“ After what we were saying you might expect something dramatic or surprising ; but neither surprise nor even interest is the centre of my thought about this dream. The chief person in the dream was myself ; that is certain. The feeling of identity was complete during the dream ; but myself in the dream was as unlike myself sitting here as you and I are unlike each other. I had a different physique in the dream ; for, while I am now rather dumpish and fair and moonfaced, I was, last night, long and lean as a rake, with a black thatch sprouting over a hatchet head. I was different mentally ; my character was not the one I now recognise myself by ; and I was capable of being intrigued by events and speculations in which the person sitting before you would not take the slightest interest.

He paused for a few seconds as though reviewing his memories ; but, on a movement from me, he continued again, with many pauses and with much snorings on his pipe, as though he were drawing both encouragement and dubiety from it.

“ Of course I am romantically-minded. We all are ; the cat and the dog are. All life, and all in it, is romantic, for we and they and it are growing into a future that is all mystery out of a past not less mysterious ; and the fear or hope that reaches to us from these extremes are facets of the romance that is life or consciousness, or whatever else we please to name it.”

“ But,” he said, energetically, “ I do not pine to rescue a distressed dragon from a savage maiden ; nor do I dream of myself dispensing life and death and immortality with a spoon. Life is Romance ; I am living, and I am Romance ; and that adventure is as much as I have the ability to embark on. Well, last night, in dream, I was a person natively capable of such embarkations ; and although I did not rescue anything from anybody, I am sure I would have done it as one to the manner born. And that character fitted me there, then, as a cat fits into its skin. In the dream I was unmistakably I, but I was not this I, either physically, mentally, or temperamentally. And the time was different. I don’t know what date it was, but it was not to-day. I don’t know what place it was, but it was not this place. I was acting in a convention foreign to the one we act in, and I was acting from an historical or ancestral convention which has no parallel in these times. I don’t remember

what language I was speaking. I don't remember the names of the people I was in contact with ; nor do I recollect addressing anybody by name. I was too familiar with them to require such explanatory symbols. You and I have been chattering these years—do we ever call one another by a name ? There is no need to do so ; and there was no need to do so with the people of my dream."

He halted, regarding me.

"Do you believe in reincarnation ?" said he.

"Do not push casual mountains on my head," I replied, "but get on with the dream."

"Well," said he, "I dreamed a dream, and here is the dream."

CHAPTER II.

My mind was full of disquietude, impatience, anger ; and as the horse stretched and eased under me I dwelt on my own thought. I did not pursue it, for I was not actively thoughtful. I hatched it. I sat on a thought and kept it warm and alive without feeling any desire to make it grow.

"She shall end it to-day," I thought in summary.

And then :

I'll end it to-day.

And then I ceased thinking, for an act had been accomplished, and I became a person on a horse ; listening to the horse ; looking at it ; feeling it with my limbs and feeling myself by its aid.

There was great pleasure in the way my legs gripped around that warm barrel ; in the way my hands held the beast's head up ; in the way my waist and loins swayed and curved with the swaying and curving of the animal. I touched her with my toe and tapped her neck ; and on the moment she tossed her head, shaking a cascade of mane about my hands ; gathered her body into a bunch of muscles, and unloosed them again in a great gallop ; while from behind the hooves of my servant's beast began to smack and pelt.

In some reaches the surrounding country flowed into and over the track ; and everywhere in its length the grass threw a sprinkle of green. There were holes here and there ; but, more generally, there were hollows which had been holes, and which had in time accumulated driftage of one kind or another, so that they had a fullish appearance without having anything of a level look ; but, on the whole, I knew of worse roads, and this one was kept in tolerable repair.

Not far from this place we left the road and struck along a sunken path all grown over at the top with shadowing trees ; and so to another and much better-kept road, and on this one I took out the reins and we went galloping.

It was not unknown to me, this place. Indeed, it was so well known

that I had no necessity to look to one side or the other, for everything that was to be seen, had been seen by me many hundreds of times ; and, if we except grass and trees and grazing cattle, there was nothing to be seen.

Here and there rude dwellings came to view—low shanties patched together with mud and rock, and all browned and baked by the sun and the rain ; and, as I rode, these small habitations became more numerous, and from them dogs and children swarmed, snarling and yelping and squealing.

Again these fell behind, and on another turn a great park came to the view ; and across it a building showed gaunt and massive, with turrets at the corners and in front, and the black silhouettes of men were moving in those airy tops.

CHAPTER III.

My horse pulled up, all spread-eagled and snorting, before a flight of stone steps, before which and on which armed men were clustered and pacing, and I went up those steps as one having right of entry. At the top I stood for an instant to look back on the rolling grass through which I had galloped a minute before.

The evening was approaching. Ragged clouds, yet shot with sunlight, were piling in the sky, and there was a surmised but scarcely perceptible greyness in the air. Over the grass silence was coming, almost physically, so that the armed rattle and tramp and the chatter of voices about me had a detached sound, as though these were but momentary interruptions of the great silence that was on its way. That quietude, premonition of silence, brings with it a chill to the heart, as though an unseen presence whispered something unintelligible, but understood ; conveying a warning that the night comes, that silence comes, that an end comes to all movement of mind and limb.

For when I parted from my horse I parted from my mood ; and was again a discontented person, filled with an impatience that seethed within me as water bubbles in a boiling pot.

“ She,” I thought, “ shall choose to-day whether she likes to or not.”

And, having expressed itself, my will set in that determination as a rock is set in a stream.

A person came to my beckoning finger, and replied to my enquiry :

“ Your honour is expected. Will your honour be pleased to follow me ? ”

She was sitting in a midst of the company, and on my approach gave me her hand to kiss. I saluted it half-kneeling, and raking her eyes with a savage stare, which she returned with the quiet constancy to which I was accustomed, and which always set me wild, so that the wish I had to beat her was only layed by the other and overflowing desire I had to kiss her.

I rose to my feet, stepped some paces back, and the conversation I had interrupted recommenced.

I was intensely aware of her and of myself ; but, saving for us, the place was empty for me. I could feel my chin sinking to my breast ; feel my eyes strained upwards in my bent face ; feel my body projecting itself against the lips I stared at ; and I knew that she was not unaware of me.

As she spoke, her eyes strayed continually to me, carelessly, irresistibly, and swung over or under me, and would not look at me. She could do that while she was talking, but while she was listening she could only half do it ; for when her tongue was stilled, I caught her mind or her body, and held her and drew her ; so that, would she or would she not, she had to look at me. And I delighted in that savage impression of myself upon her ; following her nerves with the cunning of one who could see within her ; and guiding her, holding her, all the time to me, to me, to me . . . And then she looked, and I was baffled anew ; for her eye was as light, as calm, as inexpressive, as the bright twinkle of a rain-drop that hangs and shivers on a twig.

But the game was broken by a tap on my shoulder, and, at the moment, her voice stumbled on the word she was uttering, her eyes leaped into mine and looked there, and then she was talking again, and merry and gracious.

It is a little difficult to explain these things, for I can give no name to the people I am speaking of ; nor can I say how I was known to them ; but I knew their names and qualities well, and they knew mine ; so, at the tap on my shoulder, I, knowing whom I should see, turned my eyes to that direction, and saw, for our brows were level, a golden head, great blue eyes, and, just under the rim of vision, a great pair of shoulders.

Everything about him was great in bulk and in quality, and, with the exception of our mistress, I had never met one so founded in strength and security as he was.

We turned amicably and went from the room together ; out of the great building and across the fields ; and as our feet moved rhythmically in the grass we smiled at each other, for, indeed, I loved him as my own soul, and he loved me no less.

CHAPTER IV.

As we paced in long, slow strides, the darkness had already begun to be visible, for the second half of twilight was about us. Away in the direction towards which we trod an ashen sky kept yet a few dull embers, where, beyond sight, down on the rim of the horizon, the sun had set.

There was silence, except for the innumerable rustling breed of grass and quiet trees, and a wind too delicate to be heard and scarcely to be felt ; for, though the skies were brisk, there was but little ground wind. Naught moved in the trees but the high, tender branches that swayed lazily and all alone ; leading their aery existence so far from my turbulence

of passion that I chid them for their carelessness of one who, in the very cleft of anxiety, could find an instant to remember them in.

At a time, even while we strode forward, we turned again and retraced our steps ; and my mind took one shade more of moodiness. It was he had turned, and not I. It was he always who did the thing that I was about to do one moment before I could do it ; and he did it unthinkingly, assuredly, with no idea that rebellion might be about him ; or that, being there, it could become manifest.

We re-entered, and sat to meat with a great company, and she spoke to us equally and frankly, and spoke to others with the gracious ease which was never for a moment apart from her.

But I, brooding on her, intent on her as with internal ears and eyes and fingers, felt in her an unwonted excitement, touched something in her which was not usual. When she looked at me, that feeling was intensified ; for her bright, brief glance, masked as it was and careless as it seemed, held converse with me, as though in some realm of the spirit we were in unguarded communion.

We were close together then ; nearer to each other than we would be again ; so close that I could feel with a pang by what distance we might be separated ; and could feel with doubled woe that she grieved for that which she could not comfort.

We left the table.

Little by little the company separated into small companies, and in a while the great room was boisterous with conversation. They had withdrawn and were talking earnestly together ; and I was roving about the room, sitting for a breath with this company and that ; listening to my neighbours with an ear that was hearkening elsewhere ; and replying to them in terms that might or might not have been relevant to the subject I chanced on.

But in all my movements I managed to be in a position from which I could watch those two ; so close in converse, so grave in their conduct of it ; so alive to all that was happening about them ; and yet sunk spheres below the noise and gaiety of our companions.

Her eye looked into mine, calling to me ; and at the signal I left my sentence at its middle and went towards them.

Crossing the room, I had a curious perception of their eyes as they watched me advancing ; and, for the first time, I observed the gulf which goes about all people and which isolates each irreparably from his fellows. A sense of unreality came upon me, and, as I looked on them, I looked on mystery ; and they, staring at me, saw the unknown walking to them on legs. At a stroke we had become strangers, and all the apprehension of strangers looked through our eyes.

She arose when I came within a few paces of them.

"Let us go out," said she.

And we went out quietly.

CHAPTER V.

Again I was in the open. I breathed deeply of the chill air as though drawing on a fount of life ; as though striving to draw strength and sustenance and will into my mind.

But the time had come to put an end to what I thought of evasively as "all this" ; for I was loath to submit plainly to myself what "all this" noted. I took my will in my hand, as it were, and became the will to do, I scarcely knew what ; for to one unused to the discipline and use of will there is but one approach to it, and it is through anger. The first experience of willing is brutal ; and it is as though a weapon of offence, a spear or club, were in one's hand ; and as I walked I began to tingle and stir with useless rage.

For they were quiet, and against my latent impetuosity they opposed that massive barrier from which I lapsed back helplessly.

Excitement I understood and loved ; the quicker it mounted, the higher it surged, the higher went I. Always above it, master of it. Almost I was excitement incarnate ; ready for anything that might befall, if only it were heady and masterless. But the quietude of those left me like one in a void, where no wing could find a grip and where I scarce knew how to breathe.

It was now early night.

The day was finished, and all that remembered the sun had gone. The wind, which had stirred faintly in tall branches, had lapsed to rest. No breath moved in the world, and the clouds that had hurried before were quiet now, or were journeying in other regions of the air. Clouds there were in plenty ; huge pilings of light and shade ; for a great moon, burnished and thin, and so translucent that a narrowing of the eyes might almost let one peer through it, was standing far to the left ; and in the spaces between the clouds there was a sharp, scarce glitter of stars.

There was more than light enough to walk by ; for that great disc of the heavens poured a radiance about us that was almost as bright as day.

Now, as I walked, the rage that had begun to stir within ceased again, and there crept into me so dull a lassitude that had death stalked to us in the field I should not have stepped from his way.

I surrendered everything on the moment ; and, for the mind must justify conduct, I justified myself in the thought that nothing was worth this trouble ; and that nothing was so desirable but it could be matched elsewhere, or done without.

It is true that the mind thinks only what desire dictates ; and that when desire flags, thought will become ignoble. My will had flagged, for I had held it too many hours as in a vice ; and I was fatigued with that most terrible of exercises.

The silence of those indomitable people weighed upon me ; and the silence of the night, and the chill of that large, white moon, burdened me also. Therefore, when they came to talk to me, I listened peacefully—if one may term that state of surrender peace. I listened in a cowardly quietness ; replying more by a movement of the hands than by words ; and when words were indispensable, making brief use of them.

It was she spoke, and her tone was gentle and anxious and official :

“ We have arranged to marry,” said she.

To that I made no reply.

I took the information on the surface of my mind as one receives an arrow on a shield, and I did not permit it to enter further. There, in neutral ground, the sentence lay ; and there I could look on it with the aloof curiosity of one who examines an alien thing.

“ They were going to get married !” Well . . . But what had it to do with me ? Everyone got married sometime, and they were going to get married ! This was a matter in which I took no part, for they were not going to get married to me ; they were going to marry each other ; it was all no business of mine.

CHAPTER VI.

So a weary brain thinks weary thoughts ; and so I thought ; separating myself languidly from the business of those who were making me a partner in their affairs. All I desired was that the explanations should cease, and that I might heave myself into a saddle and jog quietly to my own place.

But I knew, almost with sickness, that I could not go until this sentence had been explained and re-explained. They would inevitably consider that I could not grasp its swollen import until they had spoken under it and over it ; and explained that there was a necessity for it ; and detailed me that also.

I could foresee a dreary hour that would drone and drone with an unending amplification of duty and interest and love, and a whole metaphysic to bind these together.

Love ! They would come to that at last. But when they dared the word they would not leave it while they had a tooth to put into it.

They would tell me around it and about ; and the telling would excite them to a fury of re-telling. I should have its history, and all the din and crackle of all the words that could be remembered on that subject or german to it.

I found it happen so.

I was initiated into the secrets of their duty to their people and to themselves. I learned the intricacy of the interests wherein all parties were involved ; until it was impossible to tell where duty ended and interest began. And, in the inevitable sequel, I was the confidant of their

love. And I listened to that endless tale with the drowsy acquiescence of one moonstruck and gaping . . . drowsily nodding . . . murmuring my yes and yes, drowsily . . .

They were good to me. They were sisterly and brotherly to me. By no hairsbreadth of reticence was I excluded from their thoughts, their expectations, their present felicity, and their hopes of joy to come. For two people going alone may have verbal and bodily restraint, but the company of a third will set them rabid. It is as though that unnecessary presence were a challenge, or a query, which they must dispose of or die. Therefore, and because of me, they had to take each other's hand. They had to fondle paw with paw ; and gaze searchingly on each other and on me ; with, for me, a beam of trust and brotherliness and inclusion which my mood found sottish.

They were in love.

They whispered it to each other. They said it loudly to me. And, more loudly yet, they urged it as though they would proclaim it to the moon. . . . And about their hands was a vile activity ; a lust of catching ; a fever of relinquishing ; for they could neither hold nor withhold their hands from each other.

"Do they expect me to clasp their hands together, and hold them so that they shall not unloose again ? Do they wish me to draw their heads together, so that they may kiss by compulsion ? Am I to be the page of love and pull these arms about each other ?"

We walked on, heedless of time ; and I heedless of all but those voices that came to me with an unending, unheard, explanation ; the voices of those who cared naught for me ; who cared only that I was there, an edge to their voluptuousness.

(To be continued).

Little Walls.

(Ballads by Patrick Kelly, Dublin : Printed for the Author.)

A SWEET, monotonous music hums and whistles through these ballads. They are simple, kind and melodious. They transmute into verse something of the feeling that the country people have for the land. They give voice to what many a man of the country would say if his power over the land were changed to power over the ballad. What is unusual is that they give voice to it in a way that the country people themselves would recognise and approve. Just such words as these would surely take shape naturally from some low melody lilted by a reaper passing along the road—a melody that drifts across the consciousness in blurred snatches, sad, raggedy whispers, fragmentary twirls of humour.

The verses, piled together in rough symmetry, remind one of the battered stone walls around the fields. Such walls are not designed to encircle a mighty city. A jeering Remus wishing to turn them to ridicule would not jump them, but would push down the loose stones, uproot the intermingled living growth, and kick the whole structure into mournful gaps, trickling with dry tears of clay. They do not aspire to commemorate royal death. Their builders are untroubled by the sneering silence of the pyramids. Their aim is unassuming. Their pattern reiterates peacefully. Their build is primitive and a little uncertain, and their final contour is decided by the mouldering of the stone, the growth of weeds and creeping moss—their final colour by weather-stains, decay and little climbing flowers. But they express the desire of simple people to restrain within formal lines the riotous tangle of the land—to restrain it and yet avoid the townspeople's inharmonious manner of quarrelling with it. These little walls harmonize with the land and are, therefore, entirely right.

The phonetic spelling of these ballads is in no way stagey or irritating. It is a visible expression of their sweet, tattered music. The extra letters nestle into the words with tranquillity, the missing letters fall away as easily as raindrops. Everywhere "a foggy dew" softens articulation, "a silky wind" smooths away the sharp edges of speech. In such an atmosphere strangely spelt words become as natural and appropriate as twisted twigs and queerly shaped stones.

Ould sally trees are growin' there ;
The fairy fingers blowin' there ;
An' lazy wather flowin' there,
A-through the summer day.

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Amid the blur and murmurous mist of these ballads, I am continually aware of the stirring of something brown and bright-eyed—something that peers eagerly and timidly from between the pages of the thin grey book—something which I have discovered to be “the weeshy wren.” In every ballad I seem to catch a glimpse of the tiny friendly bird hopping and flying among the dim vapours.

Glannaroe-na-dhrolleen,
 What makes the weeshy wren
 Be livin' where no mortals own,
 Where not a sign was ever known
 To tell the life o' men?
 There's somethin' more than bushes there;
 Than creepin' briar bushes there;
 Than sally trees and rushes there;
 That I could never say.
 Oh! Glannaroe-na-dhrolleen
 Are far an' far away.

From the time I came across the wren in this verse she never left me, as I wandered through the book. Although she never actually came in sight again, I was constantly aware of her—looking mournfully from a crevice in the wall, or a broken gatepost, or a haystack, at the tinker, or the mower, or Colum Donal; looking wistfully from thorn or sally, or holly tree at the Fairy Man, or the lilting lads and colleens.

When I had finished the book, I felt I had for a few moments understood the speech of the wren—long enough for her to tell me of the joys and sorrows of her life—of how, from bridge and thatch, from meadow and crooked road, she watches mortals with a half-yearning curiosity, of how she finds a busy happiness in loneliness, hopping from briar to rock, by clear well and sedgy grasses on summer days, or “below the Galway moon.” Strangely enough, I felt she had told me also of the fear and sorrow she finds in life, of how on Saint Stephen's Day, she, the weakest and smallest of all birds, is cruelly hunted and slain in expiation of an unwitting sin.

M. S.

An Interesting Catalogue.

Messrs. Dobell (8 Bruton Street, New Bond Street, W.1) send us three catalogues—packed with things of interest and, as usual, moderately priced. One of them, an autograph catalogue, runs to more than 400 items, including letters, etc., of Browning, Thos. Campbell, the Cowden Clarkes, Geo. Crabbe, Dickens, Wm. Godwin, Thos. Gray, Wm. Hazlitt (to Leigh Hunt), Francis Mahony, Michael Davitt, Thos. Moore (to Leigh Hunt), Barry Cornwall (to Thornton Hunt).

There are many letters to, or concerning the Hunts, and five from Leigh Hunt himself, the most characteristic being one to Dr. Bird. "My system . . . is much better . . . the hurry of putting up my books and pictures (which was a part of the moving I could let nobody else look after) did me no good. . . . I have nothing further to say, except that the lane to the West End runs out to Kilburn, a little beyond the turnpike—that my cottage stands in the heart of the place, insulated in a little garden, on the gate of which is my name, on a fair plate of brass—and that your luncheon (called by us a dinner) is ready for you any day you may come, precisely at 2 o'clock."

Other letters there are addressed to Francis Dashwood, Baron Le Despencer, the leading member of the Dilletanti Society, and founder of the "Hell-fire Club" (not the Killakee premises), or Society of the Monks of Medmenham Abbey.

The *piece de resistance* is an unpublished poem of George Gissing—"Ravenna"—12 leaves entirely in the author's handwriting, written in 1873, when he was a student at Owen's College, Manchester.

A receipt dated 1790 from Thomas Holcroft, the dramatist, for £2,050, for copyright sales, is stimulating; and, later on, we find an autograph letter written by Robert Harley, Earl of Oxford, on matters of state in 1704, wrapped round a Bristol cheese in 1818, as appears by the happy finder's certificate thereunto annexed.

Several letters of Bishop Percy, some written from Dublin, also figure in the collection, and a couple of pages of the "Reliques" holograph.

Bargemen are not often devout, yet here we find "Meditations and Prayers, Hymns and Thanksgivings, collected from several authors for my own use, in the year of our redemption, 1753, and through mercy again transcribed, 1803," all by one, Richard Roberts, the "King's Bargeman." Of course, he may have been a weak fellow, overpowered by his associations; but, in any case, *qua* bargee he did not

". . . keep his virtue.

"He rowed with kings—and lost the common touch."

John Selden is represented by a letter, an anxious bookman's letter, touching the manuscripts of Richard James, and how they may be acquired: "You know, I doubt not by this time, that God hath taken from us our deere friend, Ric. James. On Monday last he was buried at Westminster. He had divers Collections and Notes of History and other things which, I presume, are in some trunks of his in his chamber at the college. Into whose hands of his

kindred they shall come I know not . . . favour me so much as to take the best course that might be that, upon such ample satisfaction as may be fit, I might have them in bulk as they are." Divers Collections! Trunksful! *O fortunati nimium!*

Later we have "A grand melo dramattick romance, written by Thos. Sheridan, Esq.," entitled "The Forty Thieves"—only a copy, however, early nineteenth century, but interesting. It was performed with great success, but never printed.

Further down we have a sample of that bad man—not unleavened badness surely, was he not a friend of Lamb?—T. G. Wainwright ("James Weathercock"). In the Addenda Mr. Birrell declares that he "certainly will never write the life of a living man for any sum of money whatsoever. How could I look him in the face again?" How, indeed!

Then we get a letter from Lord Carson in which he declines to—but you can have the *ipsissima verba* for three-and-six.

In the book catalogues are some rare things of Heywood, a run of Howell, some Dublin tracts—late seventeenth century—"A Briefe Description of Hierusalem . . . translated out of Latin . . . 1595"—a large copy but "want's map." Has anybody ever seen a copy *with* the map, I wonder? Also several firsts of Charles Johnson, the dramatist; early editions of Ben Jonson, and Vol. II. of the *Works*, 1631, etc.—a presentation autographed copy from Sir Kenelm Digby, the editor, to the Queen (quite appropriately) of Bohemia, in contemporary blue morocco, gold tooled, a fine binding: the first folio edition, 1668, of *Paradise Lost*: Pepy's *Royal Navy*, 1690: Quillet's *Callipaedia*, 1708, with Pope's autograph, "*pret. 2s.*": the dedication copy to Charles II. of Stanley's *Philosophy*, 1660, in scarlet morocco, gold tooled, with the royal arms, etc.: several items of nice bindings, Byron, the Elizabethans, and early classics.

The general catalogue has some Beardsleys, Beerbohms, a collection on Drama, firsts and presentation copies of Drinkwater, several Kiplings, a few of George Moore, miscellaneous pamphlets, Shakespeare, Shaw, Stephens, Wilde, early nineteenth century juvenile cheap books, and many other rare and desirable things.

The Aldus Bookshop (36 East 49th Street, N.Y.) have some choice books to offer—Beerbohms, Bibliography, Conrad, Kipling, George Moore. Mark Twain's *Tom Sawyer*, Hartford, 1876, "with all the correct points," is down at 175 dollars; Barrie's *Peter Pan*, illustrated by Rackham, 1906, 125 dollars; and an interesting thing, Peacock's *Paper Money Lyrics*, etc., first edition, issued anonymously, 100 copies, not for sale, original wrapper, London, 1837—Richard Bentley's copy with his autograph note, 20 dollars.

We have received from Messrs. Davis and Orioli, 24 Museum Street, London (too late for adequate notice), *A list of Modern First Editions* (which contains, amongst many other rarities, a copy of the almost unprocurable pamphlet, *Mosada*, by W. B. Yeats, 1886, and George Moore's *Martin Luther, a tragedy*, 1879); and a Catalogue of Rare Books from the 15th to the 18th century, wherein are desirable things. Booklovers would do well to avail themselves of Messrs. Davis and Orioli's offer, as made elsewhere in our pages.